A History of Violence in the Early Algerian Colony

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A History of Violence in the Early Algerian Colony

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palgrave
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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 2013 978-0-230-29431-8

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First published 2013 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

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ISBN 978-1-349-33334-9 ISBN 978-1-137-31370-6 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/9781137313706

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

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22 21 20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13

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1
Introduction

On 26 June 1842, Nicolas Jean-de-Dieu Soult, the French Prime Minister and Minister of War, reflected on the successes of his Governor General of Algeria, Thomas Robert Bugeaud:

> Bugeaud's report of 13 June on the operations undertaken by the columns of Chélif and Algiers, along with that of Marshal Changarnier, should be copied and sent to the *Message* and the *Moniteur* for publication, though certain passages detailing the burning of houses and the attack on the famous caverns ought to be excised. Those paragraphs must be edited. The publication of these quite remarkable reports will surely have a salutary effect upon public opinion. [...] I myself applaud the excellent results which have been obtained, along with the political and moral effects which the operations of M. Bugeaud will doubtless produce across Algeria, and which will indeed echo across France and Europe. [...] As is well known, I regret the inopportune skirmish at the famous caves, in which we lost a number of men who had acted rather rashly. In due course, it will be necessary to return to this theatre so that the local population should not think that they have been able to force us to retreat.[1]

This quite typical report introduces a number of key themes of this study of violence in the early Algerian colony. What it makes most plain is the way in which violence was seen to function as a form of language or conversation, effecting communication with a whole series of groups. While the key dialogue here was with those tribes who had been sent a message through this series of French assaults on their people and property, Soult also claimed that disseminating news of these attacks had the potential to affect public and political opinion in Algeria, France and

more widely across Europe. What might have been conceived of as a local action in a military campaign was revealed as being possessed of broader symbolic significance and it is clear that the declarative purpose of such violence served as part of its rationale. This was, after all, a 'theatre' in which the words writ and played by French actors echoed across a series of stages.

It was therefore imperative that these lines were carefully managed and edited. In this particular case, Soult stressed that publication of the details of the burning of houses and an attack on a series of caves would be counterproductive. The 'editing' of such details had the effect of writing the particularities of French violence and its effects upon Algerians from the story, such that readers might focus on the effects of such acts rather than on their execution. This allusive approach to the specific qualities of French violence in Algeria was borne from the experience of men like Soult and Bugeaud, who knew that their domestic opponents would use such information as a means of critiquing the brutality and futility of the policies of the armée d'Afrique. In particular, France's reliance on the *razzia* – a form of raiding supposedly based on local norms of violence – was adjudged by critics of the government to be counterproductive as a means of pacifying the new colony. It had also been alighted upon by those European critics who contended that France was establishing a barbarous empire on the coast of Africa.

Nonetheless, it is important to register that the regrets which Soult expressed in the letter related not to the suffering imposed on Indigènes but to the small number of French casualties sustained in the operation.[2] As tended to be the case, the Minister and his Governor General conveyed the impression that any such losses were the result of foolhardiness or poor planning, for it was plain that the army did not face a set of concerted foes who could challenge their dominance in the new land they were making. The local population were conceived of as a problem which would need to be solved and it was plain that the burnings and attacks on their redoubts had become the tactics by which such goals would be achieved. What this constituted in practice, as we shall see, was often the systematic destruction of settlements and crops, along with the seizure of goods and cattle and the massacre of tribes. In the case of such assaults on caves, Soult refers here to the use of smoke as a weapon of asphyxiation, such that scores of villagers might be despatched in a fashion which would convince them that no hiding places remained in their land, in contrast to their experience of using such hideouts to evade their Ottoman overlords.

Our knowledge of such violence and the way in which it was planned and reflected upon by the French has tended to focus on a small number of emblematic instances of notorious incidents, such as the burning and smoking of the caves at Dahra in 1845. This book looks in greater detail at the everyday and systematic qualities of such forms of life in the early colony. It assesses the impact of such cultures on the indigenous populations of Algeria and on French constituencies, both abroad and at home. As is plain in Soult's report, violence played an important role in the life of the colony, so we should not be surprised that its varieties, its efficacy and its evolution were much discussed both publically and privately in the 1830s and '40s.

The degree to which the sum of such acts constituted a distinct *system* of violence in Algeria has inspired considerable recent debate, which has tended to be hindered both by a focus on a small number of cases and by a reliance on polemic texts debating violence rather than evidence of its practice. Archival documentation reveals the extent to which commanders in Algeria used the term 'système' in a quite specific manner to describe their practices and its effects, as seen in Bugeaud's remark of 1841 – that the razzia was 'systematised because of its usefulness'[3] – and in the following report from the Cercles managed by the Bureaux Arabes. Writing in August 1847, Tellmann was pleased to relate that a general state of calm reigned across most of the circles in the Province of Algiers, excepting the Cercle d'Aumale, where 'A state of anarchy reigned amongst the Kabyles':

> All in their turn have come, all have offered proofs of their submission, either by paying a part of the *achour* [a harvest tax] or in returning stolen objects, though we have not been able to fully subdue all of the Djemma, for fractions of this chaotic tribe turn on each other ceaselessly. In order to put an end to this deplorable situation, the commander of the Cercle has established a base on their territory so as to be able to utterly reduce them. All of the tribes who are protected by our fort now use this opportunity to seize the grain of the Beni Sala. It seems probable that in persevering with this system, we will eventually completely eliminate this tribe.[4]

At the close of the period covered by this book, what was being described here was a system that had evidently evolved according to the circumstances that the French had encountered in Algeria. While they had succeeded in pacifying most of the tribes in the land, they had also developed tactics with which to pursue more recalcitrant groups such as

the Beni Sala. This entailed the systematic reduction or elimination of those tribes with whom the standard modes of violent communication had failed. In this instance it was quite plain that the expected 'moral effects' of earlier assaults had not succeeded in altering the character and allegiance of the tribes, so an intractable problem might only be solved through their erasure, such that complete, rather than partial, tranquillity should reign over the land.

This strategy of elimination is currently poorly understood: in terms of its enactment, its extent, the manner in which it compared to contemporaneous 'die-outs' and assaults in other settler colonies, and in the ways in which it evolved in Algeria. As we see in this instance, the army's purgative goal was to be achieved in both direct and indirect fashions, through waging war, through the destruction of the habitat and the ecology of the tribes, and through sanctioned confiscations of foodstuffs by local allies. Intriguingly, at the close of the text there is a slight equivocation with regard to the destruction of the tribes, with the claim introduced that this is merely 'probable' rather than certain.

Such a contention is of interest in part because it contradicts with what was described as a deliberate strategy only lines earlier, but also because it reveals a latent uncertainty as to the morality of such actions that is often found in such documents. So many potential justifications were offered for the outcomes of such policies that a feeling endured that French soldiers and administrators used their writing as a means of explaining to themselves how they might justify the slaughter of others. The role which nature was alleged to play as man's helpmeet in such killing was especially complex, for Indigènes were routinely associated with the barrenness of their lands, which then somehow became complicit in the destruction of their own peoples.

That the French were obsessed with violence – in their thoughts, acts and records – in the first two decades of the life of the colony is quite apparent not only across the documentary archive but also in the mutations of the French language, where the term 'razzia' (and its accompanying verb forms 'se razzier' and 'razzier') became the dominant Arabic loan word (from the word *ghaziya*), at a time when relatively few such terms migrated into French. The case of the razzia is especially interesting for its meaning changed considerably over time, beginning in the way in which it was selectively misinterpreted from the Arabic term for 'raid' so as to include a level of brutality generally unapparent in its original usage (where it denoted practices more akin to rustling) and continuing through the period 1836–47 as French razzias upon

Indigènes focused more and more on environmental destruction and the complete reduction of tribes.

This book looks at the evolution of such razzias in detail, with case studies that extend beyond the well-known examples of the massacres of the El Ouffia in 1832 and the Ouled Riah in 1845, in part to show how such atrocious violence was far more unexceptional than has been supposed. Existing bodies of work on nineteenth-century Algeria, excepting very recent work by Benjamin Brower and Abdelmajid Hannoum, have tended not to look at violence as a theme or to convey any sense of strangeness in describing the particularities of the warped and quite temporally specific conventions of French behaviour at this moment. While the early colony was understood to be a violent place, too little is known about the detail and fabric of this aspect of its culture, and, as compared with the central place of Algeria in twentieth-century thinking about colonial violence (especially in the work of Fanon), the qualities of this earlier moment remain remarkably under-conceptualised and -theorised.

This book contends that French violence was not possessed of one cause or form but was driven by an evolving, interlocking system with its own internal logic. While violence could be enacted for quite pragmatic military or strategic goals, it was often of a more ritual character, designed to convey a series of messages to its victims, its perpetrators and to more distant audiences. That violence could be as much about the self as the other was a reflection not only of the idea that through violence the encumbrance of the other might allow the self to speak more clearly but also because thinking about and practising violence induced a form of internal monologue, often almost a stream of consciousness, in the French colonial mind. As this dialogue played itself out, Algerians as victims, or even as actors, in this play became more and more absent, or coded into generic groupings which erased distinctions between types of peoples such as combatants and civilians.

This absence of the other in the dialogue of the self may seem unsurprising when we consider the more general shift in European mentalities from the early eighteenth century to the enlightened minds of the early nineteenth century. In the earlier period there is evidence from a variety of colonial settings, including North Africa, of a European fascination with local cultures which included within it the notion that it may be of value to try to see the world through the eyes of the other. In the generations after the enlightenment, this capacity to imagine alterity disappeared, nowhere more so than in Algeria, where the blinkered failure to ever imagine the ways in which Algerians might

perceive the effects of their being invaded was almost complete. Even in the extremes of the Australian colony, there existed a more developed sense of such thinking-as-the-other, with British critics of state policy wondering 'Where Aboriginal warriors had committed "depredations" or "outrages" [...] were they not reacting to white violations of their food supplies and women?'[5]

This book therefore adds to the growing literature on the 'French colonial mind', offering a detailed study of the French army in Africa in their own words, looking at how they saw themselves and how they came to imagine and construct a new world.[6] The culture of the army, the forms of violence it deployed and the morals and norms of the wars it fought are remarkably under-researched, so the bulk of this book draws on the huge corpus of documents which the army produced as an institution in its first years in Algeria.[7] This necessarily entails a consideration of the relationship between political decision-making in Paris and military imperatives in Africa, as we have seen in the examples of letters to and from Soult, but the book does not look more broadly at the role Algeria played in the metropolitan imaginary (which has been the subject of an illuminatory new work by Jennifer Sessions). This distinction between the French at home and abroad makes especial sense in this case for the army saw itself as creating a new and distinct culture in Algeria, while, in terms of its violent practices, the details of such work were not designed for popular consumption in France.

Although such an investigation necessarily entails some emphasis on particular individuals (especially Soult, whose role in formulating policy in Algeria has tended to be underestimated or misunderstood[8]) as architects of that culture, its chief focus is on the generality of a way of life and is therefore as much concerned with everyday practices as it is with ideological or policy pronouncements. The danger of a focus on such proclamations has been threefold. Firstly, because it has often promoted a stress on understanding history through polemic texts, whose relation to social praxis might be more complex than initially imagined. Second, because a focus on personalities can induce an unwillingness to look beyond events and individuals to locate structures and their determinants. Third, because the canon of individuals who come to assume the roles of 'history makers' can quickly become calcified. This book therefore aims also to include the perspectives of 'outsiders', especially Algerians, sometimes those who are well known, such as Hamdan Khodja, but also tribal leaders whose communications with the French lie in the military archives, and foreign travellers to Algeria, such as the Englishman Dawson Borrer.

The value of works such as Borrer's lies in their form as well as in their content, for while his descriptions of the massacres of Algerians are uniquely detailed, the literary form of Borrer's memoir and the manner in which he framed such bloody reminiscences are of equal worth to the historian studying the mental world which produced a culture of massive targeted violence. In order to make sense of the things that he had seen, Borrer resorted to a form of tragi-romantic mode of description, adjoining his accounts of massacres with the work of other poets, as though he feared that only the depths which they conveyed in language might adequately account for such acts and a meditation upon them:

> It was grievous to meditate upon the retired villages of the Beni Abbès transformed to smoking ruins. [. . .] It was grievous to think how a few short hours had transformed one of the more retired seats of tranquillity and native industry into a hell of devastation and misery. Mirth hailed the glorious sun as he rose to run his daily course: as he sank to his golden couch, the voice of lamentation and bitter mourning rose on high: the moon threw her cold beams on desolation.
>
> Strange – that where Nature lov'd to trace,
> As if for Gods a dwelling place,
> And every charm and grace hath mix'd
> Within the paradise she fix'd,
> There man, enamoured of distress,
> Should mar it into wilderness.
>
> [Byron][9]

This resort to a poetic mode in describing and accounting for violence was common across the early Algerian colony. There was a sense in which appeals to the romantic and the tragic were a means by which the morality of French behaviour might somehow be understood or deepened. The pain of those who had suffered was almost absorbed by the self in the manner in which the poetic imagination was a vehicle through which notions of guilt, responsibility and memorialisation might be laid out in words. In a way this amounted to a prefiguration of the themes Fanon essayed in his work with French soldiers a century later in the hospital at Blida-Joinville, in which the trauma of having killed and tortured was eased and addressed through psychiatric medicine, though in the earlier nineteenth-century moment the French senses of self were stronger and harder to break. Thus we

find, on reflecting on massacring most of a tribe, a soldier of the 1840s remarking that 'their future was now painted in sombre colours', allowing this textualised aestheticism to stand in for a sense of morality or responsibility.[10]

It might be objected that the direction in which this argument is travelling is one which treats wars as bodies of texts, as a form of cultural phenomena, when conflict of course also involves bodies on battlefields and human suffering which would seem to lie far from the abstraction of discussions of the narrative construction of war. As Shula Marks has written of cultural approaches to the history of medicine, 'In our recent concern with discourses and texts, we may be in danger of forgetting that there is another history of actual morbidity and mortality, difficult as these may be to determine especially – but not uniquely – in colonial situations, and of actual therapeutic practices and institutions, in all their ambiguities and contradictions.'[11]

Herein lies one of the chief challenges of studying this period of history, but could it in fact be the case that there is an intimate connection between the remarkable textuality of this conflict and the terrible violence it wrought on individual bodies? It was after all the case that most memoirs, letters and reports from the colony readily adopted a language of texts and stories as a means of explaining Algeria, not simply in terms of the authenticity of pasts conjured in histories or futures imagined in poetic terms, but in the present tense where enemies would be described as chimeric fictions, the behaviour of soldiers compared with the characters of Shakespeare or the actions of the army self-consciously framed in classical literary genres. Experience itself was profoundly textualised in North Africa, for an edifice of texts acted as a filter through which the new world was seen, acting as an interface between invaders and the Indigènes.

We now understand that texts ought also to be probed for their lacunae and it may not seem surprising that the most obvious absences from French colonial writings were Algerians themselves. This lack of presence in their own land was figured in a series of ways: from the contrast between vivid descriptions of the bloody wounds wrought upon the French fallen as compared with the dearth of the Algerian dead, the absence of Algerian voices or interlocutors (unsurprising given the tiny number of Frenchmen who spoke local languages in the early colony) and the failure to ever imagine oneself in the shoes of one's enemy.[12] This lack of dramatic capacity to try to see the world through the eyes of the other is one of the most universal and striking features of the colossal body of French writing on Algeria, for there exists not

a single instance of a French writer musing on how his nation would have reacted had she been invaded and whether any understanding of Algerians' behaviour could have been intuited on that basis. Strikingly, there were a number of Algerian writers who were able to operate on this counterfactual basis, not only comparing the French invaders with other imperialists, but imagining how Algerians would have behaved in such circumstances.

European settlers living in Algeria noted the ways in which cultural power played a role in shaping the life of the colony. Madame Prus, for instance, paraphrased the views of soldiers on French idealists (such as the Saint-Simonians): 'These gentlemen are visionary enthusiasts, utopian dreamers. On the strength of their vivid imagination, but at the expense of government, they send out thousands of unfortunate adventurers whose sole fate is to perish in misery on this African soil. In vain do they hope to carry out their theory of African colonisation.'[13] This disparagement of theory over facts was of course thought to stand in contrast to the pragmatic, battle-hardened experience of soldiers (which was of course no less visionary and utopian at this moment). Even before arriving in Algeria, Eugène Bodichon suggested that Europeans relied on literature to picture the role they would play on a place they imagined as a stage: 'She is considered by them to be a vast theatre where they will come to play out tragedy or comedy, according to the stamp of their character.'[14] And, as Jennifer Sessions has shown in her study of 'The Cultural Origins of French Algeria', the importance of the colony to the Orleanist monarchy was reflected in the colossal number of texts and works of art which were produced in the 1830s and '40s as forms of cultural ballast for a political project.[15] This was as apparent in popular as it was in high culture, with the fashion for cartoons, plays and fairground rides that made recreations out of colonial war, in which 'entertainments invited French civilians to identify vicariously with the Armée d'Afrique and to participate vicariously in the violence of colonial warfare'.[16]

The study of such flows between texts and action is reminiscent of the organising arguments of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, and it seems possible to contend that the case of the early Algerian colony has the potential to deepen Said's thesis. *Orientalism*, after all, stopped at a particular analytic point in that it sought to show how a hitherto underappreciated European cultural fascination with the East was to have profound implications in terms of the support it provided the political and economic project of imperialism. Said made a strong case for there being a causal

link between culture and imperialism, but he left this claim as a general proposition, proffered to a field which it might be assumed would then work on more local levels to ascertain whether such connections between knowledge and power could be found in the detailed fabric of the establishment of colonies. The Algerian case provides ample evidence as to how such a relationship worked in practice, but it would seem to extend Said's model, in that rather than it simply being possible to track the movement from texts to acts, many Europeans in the new French colony acted upon textual knowledge and then rediffused these experiences in their own writing. This text–act–text triad more successfully textualised a culture than Said could have imagined, for as Europeans acted they began to experience these actions as being heirs to their knowledge and forerunners to their descriptive prowess.

To travel along a canyon in the Kabylie was not simply to walk a hot and narrow path through mountains but to journey through those perilous ravines that were described in writing on the Barbary Coast, while it was also a prefiguring of the role this environment would play in military letters, diaries and memoirs, where the manner in which men were so brutally hemmed in by nature served as an explanatory background to soldiers' behaviour.

To kill in such an environment was also an act of decipherment, for Algerians had been textually construed as symbols of barbarity, threats and backwardness, while their disappearance would soon be reconstituted into equally broad sets of conceptual and structural goals in the writing of officers for whom killing was a question of revenge, strategy or the playing out of Darwinian necessity. To take a more specific example, the massacre of tribes was often construed as a beneficent act in that the lives of a small number of individuals were sacrificed for larger progressive goals, which France's unknown victims ought to understand would be shared by their kin as much as their killers.

Such ideas drew on broader ideas of civilisational imperialism, for, as Stora noted, 'The benefit of civilization was deployed as a favour bestowed upon the native: not physically exterminated, the latter was granted the possibility of acquiring the colonizer's superior culture.'[17] Or as Hannoum put it, 'The discourse of progress makes the natives into children who must be spanked when they misbehave – when they resist or reject colonialism and its violent practices (even then called modernity or civilization).'[18]

On a more general level, stories made sense of programmes of violence, be they accounts of war or those forms of moralising that served to explain the special levels of viciousness to which the army were forced

to resort in Algeria. If life in the colony was construed of as a piece of theatre, then massacres and assaults were evidently distinct forms of performance, designed to convey what were invariably described in military reports as 'moral effects' upon France's audience of Indigènes. If violence was a conversation, a speech act, then the logic of killing was made as much in writing, before and after the event, as it was in minds and on the battlefield.

Abdelmajid Hannoum advances a seemingly similar argument in his recent study *Violent Modernity: France in Algeria*, yet there are key differences between this work and Hannoum's approach. First, his assertion of an innate connection between violence and the modern is not followed here. Hannoum argued that 'the discourse of modernity itself inflicts and creates the conditions of violence', but in some senses this is an argument drawn to support Hannoum's concentration on sources from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards (his book essentially begins in 1847, when one might argue that the praxes of violence in colonial Algeria had already been established) and a cultural historical approach in which the connection between knowledge/texts and action/violence is presumed rather than being interrogated.[19] Hannoum is right that 'the violence of modern armaments (inscribed in modern technology) and the violence of modern texts' are 'intertwined', but it does not follow that it was the specific projects of the modern, the scientific and the human sciences that engendered such a violent culture in Algeria.[20] In fact, it seems equally plausible that premodern readings of North Africa were the chief influences upon the behaviour of Frenchmen in Algeria (as opposed perhaps to debates about the colony in the intellectual culture of the metropole). Ultimately, Hannoum's thesis is dependent much more on the rounded qualities of ideological debate in Paris than it is on the mess, angst, confusion and the day-to-day realities of the lives of soldiers and colonists in Algeria, while the difficulties and contingencies that ideas of, say, civilisational imperialism or modernity faced in practice are glossed over in the development of Hannoum's overarching thesis. As a consequence French violence loses much of its ambiguity and the sense of ethical and moral dilemmas posed in the routine writing of soldiers and politicians, as opposed to essayists and polemicists who needed only to talk about violence rather than act violently.

Violence enacted upon Algerians could therefore be understood in textual ways and it could be seen to have been motivated by knowledge acquired from texts, especially the vast corpus of work on the horrific cultures of the Barbary Coast with which Europeans travelled

to the Maghreb.[21] Yet how were such descriptions of torture, decapitation and other atrocities connected to the behaviour of the French Army in Africa? Was it really the case that French soldiers were imbued with the forms of colonial terror described by the anthropologist Michael Taussig – in which their worst fears as to how they might die were confirmed by those rare occasions when French troops were captured and burnt alive in view of their peers – or did extreme forms of violence become a key mode of communication with local peoples for other, more strategic reasons? The answer to this question varied at different times and, as Brower has observed, there is a need to account for the 'the *multiple* logics of violence in colonial Algeria'.[22]

In doing so, it is important not to map the varieties of violence in the colony onto a simple chronology in which a 'restrained occupation' (1830–35) is followed by a period of confused rule and policy-making (1835–40), the ascendancy of 'total conquest' under Bugeaud (1840–44) and the final pacification of Algeria (1845–47). Such forms of temporal shorthand have their uses, but their ordering also tends to occlude our view of forms of behaviour which were common across the period, or which mutated in ways that are not accounted for in the seeming clarity of clear moments of historical division. When Annie Rey-Goldzeiguer so beautifully wrote 'un monde se disparaître, un autre se prépare' to describe that moment at the end of the Second Empire which Ageron called 'la victoire des colons', both remarks served to structure approaches to Algerian history which imagined that the most venal forms of engagement with Indigènes began after 1870–71 rather than well before that date.[23]

More generally, the strangeness and specificity of French violence in Algeria seem curiously flattened and unexamined in most work on the period (the clear exceptions being very recent scholarship by Le Cour Grandmaison, Hannoum and Brower). It might even be argued that the lack of interest displayed by contemporary nineteenth-century French sources in the bodies of Algerians is rather mirrored in later secondary works.

That body of historical work adopts a similarly mimetic approach to the small number of cases of French atrocities which were reported in European newspapers in the 1830s and '40s, but it has showed little inclination to investigate the systematic qualities of such violence or to look closely at the many similar atrocities of which French soldiers spoke freely in their letters and reports. A certain anxiety has indeed developed with regard to the political or ideological implications in writing the history of such events, contrasting the dichotomy of the so-called 'légende

rose', which seeks to airbrush the historical past in order to present a positive picture of the French empire, with the 'légende noire', which seeks to excoriate the colonial actors of the past.[24] It is almost as though adherence to one of these polarised positions implies the abandonment of the dispassion of good historical writing, yet it might be argued that the more complex and sometimes brute realities of French colonial violence ought not to be encumbered by the roles that they are called to play in contemporary historicised discourse. There is no point in arguing that the behaviour of French soldiers was wicked according to either a contemporary moral code or a claimed universal ethics, but there is a need to describe the actions of such soldiers in their moment and the moral worlds which framed their deeds, both in terms of intent and explanation.

Similarly, accounts of the violence in the early colony need not necessarily feed into the quite different question as to whether that violence became endemic and was therefore constitutive of the horrors of the War of Independence of 1954–62 (Le Cour Grandmaison,[25] Frémeaux,[26] McDougall[27]) or the bloody Civil War of the 1990s (Hannoum[28]). Dirk Moses asked, 'Was white Australia born with the mark of Cain?', yet while it is tempting to pose such a question of Algeria, we need to know more of the specificities of early colonial violence before beginning to draw connections across the colonial, and indeed the modern, period.[29]

A third point of tension in contemporary writing on violence in Algeria addresses the possibility that there was a genocide in the colony. This question is evidently important, but what seems more imperative is the need to build up a greater stock of knowledge with regard to the atrocities, massacres, razzias and raids conducted by French troops in the 1830s and '40s. The overarching genocidal question will be more meaningfully approached from a better-resourced position. It will also be more realistically assessed when Algerian history is compared with that of other settler colonies in the nineteenth century, most particularly Australia and America, in part because of the similarities in their situations (the prevalence of exterminationist literatures and the statistical records of massive demographic decline) and partly because of the sophistication of nuanced recent historical literatures on a complex spectrum of forms of genocide and 'die outs'. To take just one example, one assumption of generalist literatures is that the intentionality of planned mass killing is one of the key markers of genocide, as opposed to 'lesser' forms of organised violence, whereas Dirk Moses's work on the genealogy of genocide and the complexity of understandings

of nineteenth-century European cultures offers grounds for rejecting straightforward understandings of intentionality.

Away from such debates, one of the nubs of the Algerian situation is that events such as the asphyxiation of hundreds of Algerian villagers at Dahra were far more common than is generally supposed. These killings generally targeted civilians (or confused the categories of civilians and combatants) and the reality of conflict in the period of the First Algerian War was that only very small numbers of French soldiers died in combat. As is well known, far more died of alcoholism, malnutrition and suicide. In some years, the number of French soldiers who died in battle (in an army numbering tens of thousands) was no more than a hundred, while the number of Algerians perishing was in the order of tens of thousands. Faced with this reality, some French soldiers were known to mock the notion that they were at war, a retort which ought to be taken seriously. Such officers derided the idea that France's chief enemy, Abd el-Kader, posed any kind of existential threat to the life of the colony, leaving aside the fact that the Emir was a sometime ally of the French and often used as a political tool in order to expand the spread of the nascent colonial state.

This is not to say that events in Algeria did not share some of the characteristics of wars. The huge corpus of primary sources detailing campaigns, battles, the logistics of supply chains, treaty arrangements and so on make that plain, but what of the sense described in French military texts that this was both war and not war? It was a time of innovation in military tactics, in terms of the development of a philosophy of counterinsurgency, but it was also understood to be a theatre of war in which French soldiers reverted to some of the more primitive instincts of the battlefield, such as plundering booty from conquered foes, summarily executing civilians and raping women and girls as a matter of course. France presented its presence in Algeria as being emblematic of the modern, progressive world, but we can well understand why many commentators were disquietened by such claims. As Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison has written of those in the early colony who alleged that it was war which made sense of the world, 'In this conception of history as a fight to the death, in which Europeans opposed the indigenous peoples of other continents, war was exalted as a privileged instrument of this progress.'[30]

The pioneering work of Le Cour Grandmaison has generated far more critics than it has admirers, but there are good reasons for believing that his rethinking of the character of the nineteenth-century empire will outlast some of the more immediate denigration of his claims.

To take one example, it now seems somewhat curious that French colonial history chose to structure itself around twin poles of assimilation and association, alleging that the empire veered between its desire to incorporate conquered peoples and the more limited goal of establishing political and cultural regimes which would sit alongside local societies. Le Cour Grandmaison's allegation that a third pole of extermination should be added to the traditional dyad understandably jolted existing explanatory models, but in the hubbub surrounding the supposed polemicism of his claims, it was often forgotten that while Le Cour Grandmaison's argument was grounded in facts (the bodies which account for demographic history) traditional histories of empire were essentially cultural and imaginary, in the sense that they depended on the analysis of texts in which ideologues promoted competing notions of colonial governance. There was often little attempt made to study the lived realities of local peoples which lay beyond such pamphleteering, though there is evidently some truth to the suggestion that Le Cour Grandmaison also relies overly on similar bodies of literature.

Nonetheless, Le Cour Grandmaison has found himself accused of two quite separate flaws which merit comment: the first is that he has a tendency to exaggerate the viciousness of French imperialists and to misinterpret nineteenth-century understandings of terms such as 'extermination' and 'extirpation', imagining that they are possessed of the same character as, say, Nazi ideas of genocide.[31] The second allegation is a more diffuse contention that his work is essentially political, in the sense that it seeks to promote a position of national self-flagellation in debates on the moral character of the French empire. In some ways, neither of these criticisms address the specificity of Le Cour Grandmaison's claims, or at least ought to be bracketed in a preliminary sense so that the details of his argument can be considered in more detail before the totality of his case is rejected.

With regard to the first two decades of the Algerian colony, Le Cour Grandmaison makes seven key claims: that French historians have tended to gloss over the realities of the conflict,[32] that the 'specificities of the war' have been evaded,[33] that the 'excesses' of war have been acknowledged but claimed to be isolated rather than forming part of a 'system',[34] that the horrors of the War of Independence (1954–62) and the Civil War (1992–c.2002) ought to be understood in the broader context of Algerian history,[35] that war was 'privileged and exulted as a tool of progress',[36] that history and science gave 'legitimacy' to exterminationist racism, while shaping a politics which could make such ideas real,[37] and that while exterminationism may have seemed a marginal

feature of colonial debate, its public discussion accorded the idea of annihilating local peoples authority.[38]

If criticism of Le Cour Grandmaison is going to move beyond the evaluation of the more general import of his claims and the value judgements they support, it is these quite specific assertions which merit closer investigation. Together they coalesce to make up Le Cour Grandmaison's claim that Algeria represented 'une guerre d'un genre nouveau'.[39] It is the detailed character of this 'guerre totale' that will be evaluated in this book, along with his claim that this new form of European war was underpinned by spatial and historical logics, 'these two things conferring on Europeans a civilising mission which legitimated a policy of colonial and exterminatory expansion which they believed was vital for their existence and their growth'.[40] In some senses, this approach shifts the study of Algeria towards more general studies of empire and violence in the period from the seventeenth century onwards, exemplified by claims such as Muchembled's that 'As the [European] interior was pacified, the violence of the young males, beginning with sons of good families, was partially reoriented towards the [colonial] exterior.'[41]

The seeming radicalism of Le Cour Grandmaison's approach arises from its stark differences to the coverage of the early Algerian colony in colonial and, especially, military history. The stability of these genres depended on their adopting an approach and a language which drew on earlier, primarily European, models, which necessarily excluded the idea that radical new forms of conflict might have come into being in Algeria. While it is true that some emphasis is placed on the novelty of guerrilla and counterinsurgency tactics in the Algerian theatre, the underlying assumption of such work has been that the 'first colonial war' was a campaign built around battles, conquest and pacting similar to European wars of the early nineteenth century. This view was propagated in the considerable number of 'instant histories' of the conquest of Algeria that appeared in the 1830s and '40s, with the historical framing of such work rather unconsciously transferred to historical literatures of the twentieth century. They also, of course, almost universally figured the French as the subjects of this moment, with Algerians cast as little-mentioned objects, focusing on the agency of the invader and the construction of a new world as opposed to the disintegration of indigenous cultures.

This book will therefore make a case for disinterring our understanding of the first two decades of France's colony in Algeria which is presently entombed in these genres. It borrows from the new history

of genocide which has looked afresh at other colonial societies at this moment, especially Australia, contending, as the originator of the term genocide Raphael Lemkin alleged, that historians tended to underestimate genocide with their fascination with presenting history from the 'point of view of wars for territorial expansion, of royal marriages'.[42] Moses notes that a second advantage of such approaches that are inherently sceptical of the notion that colonial settlement and violence ought to be viewed through the prism of war is that 'Unlike the alternative approaches of military history or generic frontier violence (especially the preoccupation with massacres), it highlights the complex interplay between settler communities on the frontier and metropolis and the state in its various incarnations.'[43] This is of critical importance in the Algerian case, where a stress on personalities, events and polemic debates has generated histories which understate the structural effects of French rule on Indigènes and which posit the importance of a kaleidoscope of French political and ideological positions, which tend to melt away when they are considered in detail. Interestingly one of the few sociological accounts of nineteenth-century Algeria, that of the Algerian scholar Mahfoud Bennoune, instinctively reached conclusions similar to those of Lemkin and Moses with overt discussion of the 'war crimes'[44] of this moment and Bennoune's claim that Bugeaud had reached the point of 'committing genocide with the full support of his government'.[45]

This is most apparent in terms of the confluence of positions that can be seen between metropolitan power, the office of the Governor General and French commanders on the frontier in the 1840s. While traditional histories have tended to stress conflict between such groups, it was quite clear that they were in agreement on the manner in which they believed Indigènes should be treated and the forms of violence that were appropriate to deploy against them. The project of the history of violence is therefore partly concerned with the goal of writing violence into the history of war.

Two other generic presuppositions which merit questioning are the notion that a war took place in the first two decades of the colony and the operational independence of the army in Africa. While it was true that the Ministry of War and the Prime Minister offered almost complete support for the actions of the army, it was also apparent that metropolitan power often had no sense of the character of colonial life and governance. This was clear in the letters which the Minister of War wrote confidentially to his Chef d'Escadrons Jolly in April 1842, whom he sent to Algeria to report back on a whole series of details of

life there, which he did not trust that he understood from his official correspondence with Bugeaud and other generals:

> You will send me details of the size and composition of the expeditionary columns, along with news of the morals of the officers in command, as well as the movements of the columns and the aims of such manoeuvres. [...] In particular you will gather information on the enemy forces they combat, the kinds of troops they oppose and the positions they occupy. [...] Finally you will let me know of the state of our troops, in terms of their military ethos, their discipline and their conduct on marches and when engaged with the enemy.[46]

Soult stressed to Jolly that his report would be 'utterly confidential' and 'not to be spoken of with anyone', and that he had to take care to make sure that he established good terms with the Governor General and other officers on whom he was to spy. The implication of such correspondence was evidently the notion that Soult believed that the detailed fabric of the army's engagement with Algerians was kept secret, or allusively vague, from him in 1842, though, as we shall see, this instinct was in no sense driven by a conviction that the strategy structuring such encounters was wrongheaded.

Taussig

Were the atrocities French soldiers perpetrated in Algeria a function of the horrors they believed would be wrought on their own bodies? There is no doubt that the Barbary States had a reputation of being a place of unique savagery and that when Europeans travelled to the Maghreb such ideas were at the forefront of their minds as they negotiated this new and mysterious environment. These fears were amply confirmed in very public ways when small numbers of settlers and soldiers were decapitated, burnt alive or tortured in other demonstrative ways in the early years of the colony. It was plain to many French interlocutors that the bestial nature of this brutality was designed to broadcast an important general message to the invaders above and beyond these specific instances of carnage. Such dialogic accounts of colonial violence offer plausible psychological explanations which rationalise what can seem to be quite irrational forms of brutish atrocities, but how valid are they in accounting for the history of violence in 1830s and '40s Algeria?

Historians might reap a theoretical dividend from a consideration of the more specific area of terror-induced colonial violence, for discussions of this theme have in the main been anthropological, chiefly in the work of Michael Taussig on South America and Hal Langfur (also on Amazonia).[47] Taussig nonetheless believed that his Peruvian case study was of more general relevance, asserting:

> The construction of colonial reality that occurred in the New World has been and will remain a topic of immense curiosity and study – the New World where the Indian and the African became subject to an initially far smaller number of Christians. Whatever conclusions we draw as to how that hegemony was so speedily effected, we would be most unwise to overlook or underestimate the role of terror. And by this I mean us to think through terror, which as well as being a physiological state is also a social fact and a cultural construction whose baroque dimensions allow it to serve as the mediator *par excellence* of colonial hegemony. The space of death is one of the crucial spaces where Indian, African and white gave birth to this new world.[48]

With regard to Algeria, it will be useful to evaluate four specific features of Taussig's case: first, that terror was a significant producer of European hegemony – indeed that it was its 'mediator *par excellence*'; second, that the sensation of terror functioned, physiologically, culturally and socially; third, that it ought to be understood in its 'baroque' dimensions in the complex manner in which we would conventionally read works of art; and fourthly, that we should always be alive to the importance of 'spaces of death', confident that deeper meanings of the making of empire can be found in such places.

'Anthropology', according to Taussig, needed to move beyond 'the standard rational explanations of the culture of terror', for in terms of understanding the ways in which empires were made, there was a need to acknowledge that behind 'the search for profits, the need to control labour, the need to assuage frustration and so on lie intricately construed long-standing cultural logics of meaning – structures of feeling – whose basis lies in a symbolic world and not in one of rationalism'.[49] As we will see confirmed in Algeria, with its strange new rituals of the razzia where local forms of violence were reconfigured by colonial soldiers, the traces of the 'symbolic world' of Europeans in imperial outposts were often inscribed in a 'magical realist' genre, not dissimilar in its own way to those genres of the fantastic and the utopian so typical of the metropole

at this moment. The razzia, Pierre Montagnon wrote, 'was the ritualised spectacle of the conquest'.[50]

More specifically, Taussig meant to describe the genre of stories about violence which terrified Europeans who found themselves living in colonial spaces of death, such as the Putumayo rubber barons in the Amazon of the 1910s. 'Far from being trivial daydreams indulged in after work was over, these stories and the imagination they sustained were a potent political force without which the work of conquest and of supervising rubber gathering could not have been accomplished.'[51] As the Peruvian judge Rómulo Paredes wrote in 1911, 'Their imagination was diseased [...]', referring to the rubber-station managers, 'and they saw everywhere attacks by Indians, conspiracies, uprisings, treachery etc.: and in order to save themselves from these fancied perils . . . they killed, and killed without compassion.'[52] For Taussig, rather like Ricœur, 'To an important extent all societies live by fictions taken as reality', but the uniqueness of colonial situations was the speed and directness of the link between idea and action, for in a sense the lack of safety and uncertainty of living in such places increased the need to make stories and to act upon them.[53] The fear of the colonist was then projected more generally through baroque violence in order to induce an equal sense of dread among subject populations.

While Taussig's model may not wholly explain events in Algeria in the middle third of the nineteenth century, his ideas are at the very least a useful corrective to most literatures on the subject, for they reveal how dependent, in quite unspoken ways, they are upon rational explanations of colonial violence. Most such rationality is subsumed within the genre of military history, for it is the conventions of the genre itself which suggest that there is no real need to either write about violence or seek explanations for particular forms of savagery, since such things are to be expected in the course of wars. As Jean-Claude Vatin blithely remarked, 'The story of the army's occupation of Algeria has no further need of being told. It represented merely the first stage of the establishment of the colonial system proper, of which each stage is well known.'[54] This was, as André Jardin and André-Jean Tudesq noted in a similarly casual fashion, 'a war which resembled a gigantic game of tag in which the enemy soon came to play the part of the hunted quarry'.[55]

When events such as the massacre at Dahra erupted beyond the boundaries of such generic conventions, it was quite striking that nineteenth-century actors and the instant histories they produced depended heavily on scores of different small rationalisations for the enormity of such violence. Hundreds of men, women and children were

asphyxiated in caves, for instance, because the wind had moved in an inopportune direction, or the tribe had brought it upon itself, or an Islamist plot had lain behind the events, or the Jesuits were somehow to blame. Strikingly what we never find in such accounts is anything coming close to Taussig's 'magical realist' genre of description, for it seemed imperative not to describe the moment of death, the appearance and number of corpses, or in any sense to acknowledge the humanity of the dead, or the fact that a human encounter took place in the massacre. As Bugeaud proudly wrote of the 1836 class of the military academy when they were regretfully despatched back to France in 1842, 'they knew how to inspire the confidence of their peers, and to inspire terror in the hearts of the enemy'.[56]

Contents of the book

This book is divided into two parts, the first of which (Chapters 1–3) contextualises the field of study and the life of the armée d'Afrique, while the bulk of the book's argument and description of the culture of violence in Algeria is essayed in Chapters 4–7. Those who are familiar with the early history of the colony may wish to move straight to the second part of the book.

Chapter 2 looks at French knowledge of the Barbary Coast before the invasion so as to investigate whether the distinct culture of violence which emerged in the colony was a response to European beliefs about the unique savagery of North Africa. It also considers the prevalence of the idea of 'holy war' in the early colony and the possibility that a new form of war was fought to secure Algeria.

Chapter 3 describes the complex political environment in which the French army operated in the 1830s, considering the divisions and alliances which cut across the army, early colonists, royal, political and business interests in the metropole, along with interested foreign powers in and outside the region. This complexity and disunity generated a profound sense of uncertainty as to the purpose of the colony, which became articulated in what became known as 'the Algerian question', which actually corralled together the following questions: What is the purpose of the colony? How should it be organised and governed? Should France remain in Algeria? Its provision of new statistical evidence reveals how few French soldiers lost their lives in conflict and poses the question as to whether there was a war in the early colony. This question is an important one, for if there was no war, the frames and language of the genre of military history, which have conventionally been

used to describe this moment, would seem ill-suited to account for the actions of the army at this time. The chapter also analyses the myth of Abd el-Kader.

If the first three chapters of the book are concerned with the life of the French army in Algeria, the second half of the work is blunter in its concentration on the effects of the occupation on the lives of Algerians. The absence of war as it was conventionally understood and the scant French casualties did not imply a dearth of violence in French encounters with Algerians or the lack of a sustained assault on local cultures. Bugeaud was partly correct in implying that he invigorated the French military effort such that it might be described as operating from a war footing, but he was hardly the originator of specific forms of assault which, as Chapter 4 shows, had been deployed from the first moment of the conquest.

Bugeaud's chief innovation, as is well known, was to extend the scope and scale of such engagements in his development of the razzia as the fulcrum of his mission to pacify Algeria. What Chapter 5 shows has been less well understood is what we might call the genealogy of the razzia, that is to say, the manner in which they related to traditional forms of violence and raiding in the region, and the ways in which they moved beyond such practices to become a quite different form of military and political tools. Under Bugeaud's command the razzia became a form of genocidal massacre, used to wipe out recalcitrant tribes who would not pact with the French army or who placed other impediments in the way of the broader operational objectives of the army in Africa.

The 'razzia system' formed one part of Bugeaud's nation-building project which aimed to impose certainty, borders and futurity onto Algeria, where the new colony had seemed ill-defined in terms of its purpose, borders and outlook to those who had posed the 'Algerian Question' in the 1830s. One of the chief goals of razzias was to destroy habitats and agricultural economies so as to quell local opposition to France in the distant future as much as in the present, for if the land no longer provided a living for its traditional occupants, they faced no future as a people and not merely as a generation in conflict with France. Chapter 6 looks in detail at three such environmental and exterminatory razzias from the 1840s.

Quite what form of economy would emerge in place of those which were displaced was much discussed among interested French parties, with many opposing the view of Bugeaud and some of his fellow generals that a military colony should occupy and exploit the land. There were powerful interest groups – most especially French traders – who did

not believe the army itself should grab these spoils of war, but, equally, there were those in French military, economic and political elites who believed that the goal of establishing a *tabula rasa* on Algerian soil such that new European futures should be writ upon it was misguided or inhumane. Those debates were important ones for, in Chapter 7 we see, they shed light on the question as to whether there was an Algerian genocide.

Across these seven chapters the book develops a thesis made up of seven interlocking claims: that the French arrived fearful in Algeria, which induced certain forms of behaviour; that there was no war in the early colony; not least since Abd el-Kader was as much an invention as a threat; though French violence was real and terrible; especially in the form of the razzia, which evolved rapidly through the period; to the point where genocidal moments can be identified. Six key contexts play a role in the development of this thesis: first, that French violence depended upon a culture in which thinking as one's imagined barbarous interlocutor came to seem quite normal; second, that a strong culture of legalist engagement with Algerians was abandoned by 1837; third, that systemic forms of seemingly unplanned violence were strategised and enacted; fourth, that evasion and secrecy cast a veil over what were in reality clear lines of responsibility and decision-making from Paris to Algiers to the mountains of the Kabylie; fifth, that a thread of quite specific forms of violence can be traced through ethnographic descriptions of the Maghreb, the subsequent actions of the army in Algeria and, finally, their rationalisations of their behaviour in letters, reports and memoirs; and, lastly, a moral tenor in French thinking about violence, which while primarily justificatory occasionally displayed hesitancy or uncertainty.

The book closes in 1847 for two simple and related reasons: firstly, because this year marked an end to the initial pacification of the Arab coast and the Kabyles mountains and, secondly, because the violence of the ensuing French campaigns of the Sahara are brilliantly covered by Benjamin Brower. The sense that this year marked the end of the first phase of the French conquest of Algeria was also apparent in military documentation, which stressed that new forms of warfare would need to be developed in the desert environment of the Sahara, where the speed of the cavalry would replace the reliance on the infantry in the more inaccessible war zones of the first decades of the conquest:

> We understand that in changing location, we will also need to change the way in which we are organised. No longer will we find ourselves

> locked in the rugged country: no more woods, ravines or mountains. Instead, our work will take place on the immense plain, on terrain which will favour marching and the deployment of the cavalry. The nature of the war will change too, for no longer will we need to seize and occupy redoubts, for we will be chasing an enemy fleeing great distances with his herds and his riches, and we will rely on speed above all to capture him. [...] We must not then hide from the fact that these will be the tactics which we will use more often than not. The Arabs are no longer possessed of any illusion that they are able to truly resist us.[57]

This was, therefore, a moment of relief for the armée d'Afrique, for they were now finally sure that they had bested their foes in Algeria and that they might be able to return to modes of warfare much better suited to their own strengths as an army. No longer would they be 'locked in the rugged country' of the Kabylie, fighting their environment as much as the tribes who emanated from such places. The 'nature of war' could return to something approximating traditional European understandings of conflict, rather than the brutal, eliminatory methods that had been designed as responses to the environment of the first two decades of the conquest.

2
‘Algeria’: The Archaeology of Barbary

In European historical and geographical literatures, the people who would become known as Algerians were described as being among the most fearsome that walked the earth. Writing soon after the French invasion, the British author Lord Percival Barton described a people who could at times display great humanity towards others, but who contained within themselves the potential for ‘savage atrocity’ and an ability to ‘throw aside all sense of moral obligation’.[1] For this reason Europeans had traditionally seen themselves as having been justified in behaving in ways which mirrored the brutal posture of Algerians towards others. The Maghreb was established as a specific moral realm in which locally appropriate forms of behaviour were sanctioned, as was seen in Britain’s raids on the coast throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The British admiral Lynam remarked on one of these sorties, ‘There can be no reasonable objection [. . .] to an occasional bombardment of a pirate town; it is a good drill for a rusty navy.’[2] In other words, violence begat violence, which was a necessary expression of European power, while there existed no distinction between combatants and civilians in this realm. Rather presciently, Barton remarked that such raids ‘repressed’ the ‘evil’ of the Barbary Coast, but that it was ‘not exterminated’.[3] France would need to complete that task, in what Barton would call the Algerian ‘experiment’.

Ann Thompson has suggested that there was a distinct hardening in European attitudes towards the Maghreb across the eighteenth century, especially as the starkness of a dichotomy between ‘Barbary’ and ‘Enlightenment’ was established in the last decades of that century.[4] Nonetheless, this reinforcement of European beliefs saw in many ways the extension of a set of tropes of innate indigenous violence, slavery and the morality of annihilatory revenge, which had been popular in

French and British texts since the early seventeenth century. In 1630, for instance, de Brèves' travels to 'Barbarie' and other outposts of the Ottoman empire were framed in the context of a book title that promised an evaluation of the 'means and methods for annihilating the Turkish Empire'.[5] Indeed, Dorothea Gallup argued that there were in fact few shifts in French views of North Africa in the period between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, but instead 'a homogenous view of Algeria which developed under the impact of religious propaganda disseminated by religious orders pursuing the redemption of Christian captives in Barbary [...] based on the medieval anti-Islamic polemic which had provided the ideological framework for the crusades and the foundation of these orders'.[6]

Over time, European readers came to expect such judgements on the Maghreb and a part of the popularity of African historical and travel literatures evidently derived from the fulfilment and exploration of these expectations of the genre. This was made quite plain in the 1758 French text *Histoire des Etats Barbaresques qui exercent la piraterie*, written by an English resident in North Africa. Its author noted that 'While everyone speaks of the cruelty of the Algerians and the punishments they deserve, they are ultimately a people of whom we scarcely know more than the most obscure of the tribes of America.'[7] Although claiming that he was not 'an apologist for the Algerians',[8] the writer offered an unusually nuanced picture of slaving in the Maghreb, claiming that some European slave memoirs were false and were in fact based on documentation which was bought from crooked monks.[9] He also contended that it was understandable that North Africans hated other nationalities, and the Spanish and Portuguese more than any others, for historical memories of the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Iberia informed the ways in which Maghrebis viewed Europeans.[10]

Ask yourself, he demanded of his audience, whether it was not in fact this prism of religious difference that lay at the root of so much European prejudice that coloured views of Algiers. Would it not be the case that if Europeans spoke to Muslims who abandoned their turbans and disguised themselves as Christians, they would admit that such men were 'sound and reasonable', but that all such qualities disappeared when the difference of their faith became apparent?[11] 'Admit', he asserted, 'that men are pretty much the same in all nations',[12] not least since 'if we subject ourselves to serious self-examination, we find that we are guilty of the same vices we impute to other nations'.[13]

In such remarks we find a radically different approach to the Algerian Other which is wholly absent from either published or unpublished

texts in the nineteenth century. Where earlier generations had suggested that religious prejudice might have constituted an unfortunate lens through which to view Muslims (and that such enmities had a complex history in which blame could be imputed to Europeans as much as to Arabs), nineteenth-century writers were essentially ahistorical (much as they might claim to have a profound interest in the past) in their certainty of the radical dissimilarity of the character of men in such distinctly different places. The instinctive cosmopolitanism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (exemplified by Gulliver[14]) was to be replaced by a sense of national and continental certainty that was of course historically impoverished in that it no longer understood how events such as the expulsions of 1492 had been constitutive of both European and Islamic histories. Most tellingly of all, the self-reflexive quality this earlier writer displayed in choosing to imagine that Europeans might be 'guilty of the same vices' found in other races is a quality absent from any nineteenth-century text.

In this important sense, French views of Algeria were not unlike the new British conceptions of India which developed in the nineteenth century, where a respect for the difference of the Other's culture was generally replaced by a blinkered assumption of absolute cultural superiority.[15] Tellingly, as compared with this later atmosphere, the author of the *Histoire des Etats Barbaresques* asserted that the great violence of local culture was due to the political structures of the Maghreb and the 'character of their militias'.[16] The broader significance of this claim is that, quite unlike nineteenth century readings of Barbarian cruelty, this earlier text adopted a rational, quasi-social scientific approach to local violence, which it saw as a social construct and a function of structural features of the civilisation. It is somewhat ironic that two and three generations later, in an intellectual culture apparently more fully Enlightened, and in which the nascent social sciences took great interest in primitive cultures, such as those found in North Africa, that violence was almost always understood to be innate, primal and an unchanging feature of the Arab or Berber character.

More generally, however, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European texts on the Barbary Coast stressed the brutality of the region's inhabitants, their relative inhumanity, the despotism of their rulers and the difference and inferiority of their religion. Such work was also full of both instructive descriptions of the mores of local society, such as Ramadan and the status of Muslim women, and exuberant accounts of the lives of captured Europeans, including pained discourses on incarcerated men wondering whether cannibalism might be an expedient

means of enduring their African ordeals. Colley has gone so far as to suggest that such captivity narratives are possessed of a special power as proto-ethnographies, often to be trusted in their descriptions of other cultures.[17] This seems a queer suggestion, since there is evidently much that is to be distrusted in such texts, but we might perhaps say that when accidental knowledge is conveyed regarding local society, its veracity seems more likely than when the authors of such works consciously reflected on the value of the people they described. Colley made a better point when she suggested that the experience of captivity, and the narratives this generated, led to a new European form of self-reflexion on 'conventional wisdoms about nationality, race, religion, allegiance, appropriate modes of behaviour and the location of power'.[18]

When discussing the cruelty of North Africans, it is important to note that this trait was often paired with descriptions of subsequent European 'suffering', establishing the contours of an important dialogic trope that would come to frame relations between Maghrebis and whites.[19] Moors were ravenous beasts who 'without the least mercy' 'butchered' shipwrecked sailors.[20] They would taunt their captives, making 'the most outrageous menaces, pointing to the fire and giving them to understand that they will be burned alive; others drawing their sabres, appeared resolved, by their gestures, to cut off their heads'.[21] They 'laughed uncommonly' as they watched sailors die on rocks off shore, while books also included horrific illustrations of the kinds of decapitation that were meted out in Barbary.[22]

However, when the details of such stories are considered more carefully, it was plain that shipwrecked Europeans had cause to thank the fact that there were real distinctions between different groups in the Maghreb, and that they were by no means cruelly treated by all whom they met in Africa. Some were offered camels, food and horses by political elites, while the threat of imperial punishment induced other Moors to 'be a little civil' in their dealings with captives.[23] It was also not the case that Europeans necessarily lost all agency, becoming wholly enslaved, for reports of their acting on their free will often described the vengeful violence they wreaked on 'country Moors', habitually in concert with the 'officers' who guarded them. In a typical description of such encounter, a group of Englishmen became involved in a financial dispute with 'country Moors', in which some of the Europeans 'rode off' to gather their imperial captors so that they could deal with their foes 'pretty briskly', and while they waited the Englishmen 'were not idle and had the pleasure to see the blood trickling down a good many of their faces'.[24]

Nevertheless, a specific feature of European characterisation of the inhabitants of the Barbary Coast was that they were 'inhuman Moors'.[25] This judgement on human value had been apparent since at least 1668, when the first European colonial power in the region (the English) had denied rights to Muslims in Tangiers on the basis that they were 'so barbarous and so poor and so continuously embroiled in civil war, that no near prospect can be imagined to make them apprehended'.[26] Tales of shipwrecks and captivity went on to stress a dichotomy between the civility of 'respectable' European persons with the 'wild beasts' they encountered.[27] They were 'the enemies of religion and humanity', with the human becoming congruent with the European.[28]

The division of the world between the human and the inhuman was but one part of a series of interlocking binaries that also included a stark contrast between the benevolence of European monarchs and the tyranny and despotism of the rulers of Barbary. As compared with the civilised status of the English or French subject protectively governed by their kings, the North African was 'An unfortunate Sufferer under the wild and untameable Ferocity of a Barbarian, whose wretched subjects knew no law but his licentious will, and whose Dictates, however irrational and inhuman, must on no pretext be disobeyed'.[29] Such rulers imposed:

> Enormous taxes and terrible fates for those who do not pay. In this case, he let loose his Black army on the defaulters. A general terror spreads over the devoted country, and destruction marks the footsteps of the barbarian troops, whose vengeance spares not even the infants of such as cannot pay the contribution required.[30]

The actualisation of despotism therefore came in the form of terrible varieties of violence wrought upon civilian populations, including children. The pashas and muleys were in effect no different from Herod or indeed the vengeful Yahweh of the Pesach. Death and indeed the meaning of one's last moments before execution meant rather different things in this otherworldly place. Rulers would subject their subjects to death by strangulation, ensuring that they took hours to die[31] while the massacre was regarded as one of the commonest forms of collective punishment.[32] There was also the evident contradiction that ascribed so many of the faults of Maghrebi society to a form of 'slavery so much abhorred by Britons', at a time when the British economy evidently depended greatly on its own projects of enslavement.[33]

The third set of oppositional pillars that held together the textual edifice of Barbary were those that represented the absolute difference of the Christian faith from Islam. More important still was the idea that the inhabitants of Barbary viewed the world in such terms. They saw their captives as 'Christian Dogs and Unbelievers, fellows that deserved no mercy'.[34] Texts purported to detail conversations among Arabs in which they proposed death to the infidels who had strayed on to their land, yet even such reconstructions of the world of locals were forced to become more nuanced than their initial polarities would suggest, as seen here:

> The barbarians assembled in the hut where the three captives were, to deliberate on their fate. Some, conformably with a principle of their religion, advised that they should be put to death, conceiving that the sacrifice of these Christians would ensure them the joys of Mahomet's paradise. Others from a principle of interest, and the hope of a great ransom, were of a contrary opinion, thus the assembly broke up without coming to any determination.[35]

A tension therefore existed between two types of wickedness here, with the demands of the sacred challenged by the avarice of the profane.

What was clearer from such texts was the assurance that faced with the threats of the Mahometans, the good European should not renounce their own faith and convert. The angelic figures of French women, such as Mlle de Bourke, came to symbolise the virtues of such resistance. As she declared, 'I am not afraid that these people will kill me but I am apprehensive that they will attempt to make me change my religion; however I will suffer death rather than break my promise to God.'[36]

Yet the more detailed substance of such texts reveal the fact that such declarations were reflections of European anxieties that their countrymen should choose to convert to Islam. While such conversions could be rationalised for they were revealed to be the desperate steps that the impoverished and endangered would take in this hostile environment, they also played on something akin to an ancestral memory that Christianity and Islam might not be the purely polar opposites which the literatures of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries proposed.[37] It was anyhow explained that converts were 'treated with contempt by most Moors who see their conversion as being caused only to escape slavery'.[38]

More generally, the idea and the reality of conversion threatened the absolute qualities of the dichotomous portrayal of Barbary's absolute

alterity. In itself, this revealed a great deal about the European mind at this moment, for its dependence on a framing of the utter difference of these two worlds was necessarily a fragile construction, often undermined by the details of the lives of Europeans in North Africa, which perversely led to the coining of new arguments and ideas that could support the rigidity of this intellectual edifice. The full form of this creation was essentially that form of Orientalism pieced apart by Edward Said, which increasingly came to depend on an insistence of the separation of the European mind from that of its Other. This was the case even when it would have been to the strategic advantage of the culture whose people were captured in the deserts of Algeria and Morocco, for texts on the Barbary Coast rarely reveal any sense of European cunning or strategic attempts to seize advantages through thinking through the positions of the Moorish enslavers. To think as they thought would have been to deny an essential form of difference.

The fretfulness we find in writing about conversion to Islam is mirrored in a more general form of angst regarding the veracity of captivity narratives and the larger discourse of difference they played a role in constructing. Such texts continually stressed the veracity of their accounts, the fact that they depended upon sworn testimonies, the provision of witness statements from men such as priests and so forth. Thomas Troughton, for instance, swore an affidavit in 1751 that his claims were true, while others who had been captured felt moved to swear that 'the incidents therein related are facts, without exaggeration to represent our cares more deplorable than they really were'.[39] A further rhetorical strategy employed to buttress such assertions was the frequent publishing manoeuvre whereby a series of captivity narratives were followed by a history of the Barbary Coast. The implication of such a pairing seemed to be that readers were challenged with the idea that any questioning of the truth of one half of a book necessarily called into question the veracity of the other – and since histories were records of facts, the same must be true of the more sensational tales with which such books began. What is also striking about such claims is the extent to which they figure a foregrounded reader as an important actor in the construction of these narratives about Barbary:

> As no earthly blessing is more important than liberty; and as no people possess it more eminently, or know how to esteem it more justly, than True Britons, the contents of the following sheets cannot fail of being truly affecting to our readers.[40]

It was this affect upon readers in France as well as in England that was quite apparent in the first decades of the Algerian colony, for through such texts it was plain that the French had learned how locals approached the world and how they themselves ought to think in and about this place. Having explored Taussig's thesis that fear generated atrocious new forms of imperial violence and looked at that stock of preconceptions and fears in which Europeans had invested before 1830, how did such ideas mesh with records of the behaviour of the French in the early decades of the colony?

Quite understandably, French soldiers were apprehensive in this strange new environment. Fears of being attacked were borne out in battles with Algerians, while very specific named fears of decapitation, torture and being burned alive were ever-present worries among troops in the 1830s and '40s, especially those who were posted to the edge of empire or whose poorly manned battalions moved between the more secure forts which came to represent safety.[41] Such feelings of terror were by no means restricted to the early colony, for they also played an important role in later colons' descriptions of their lives as the emissaries of civilisation at the borders of empire.[42]

Unsurprisingly traditional apprehensions regarding imprisonment and captivity were also replayed after 1830, though it had to be admitted that local customs varied considerably in this regard. To take one example from 1837, Méchain wrote to the emperor of Morocco to contrast his behaviour towards prisoners as compared with that of Abd el-Kader, whom the French correspondent had to admit was surprisingly liberal in his treatment of prisoners, for this 'embittered enemy' tended simply to return such men to the occupying forces. By contrast, the Emperor 'was flagrantly hostile in the manner in which he tolerated the cruel treatment to which his people subjected French prisoners'.[43] The contrast between the two was even more striking since the 'devoted Emir never claimed that his prisoners had embraced Islam and had never encouraged them so to do'.

The trope from captivity literatures which was most relentlessly reinscribed in the new colony was undoubtedly that which described the extreme brutality of the people of the Barbary Coast. Writing in 1884, René de Grieu looked back rather wistfully to the excitement of campaigning in the early 1830s, when French soldiers knew full well that local 'adventurers and bandits [...] dreamed only of massacring and pillaging'.[44] French soldiers were not 'killed' or 'lost' in the warring of the early colony but 'massacred', sometimes in ways which mirrored the stories of earlier texts, such as Berthezène's March 1831 Expedition

against an Arab tribe who were said to have massacred Frenchmen who had been shipwrecked.[45] The appropriate response to such horrific violence was quite obviously to exact vengeance against the perpetrators, as Soult made plain in September 1831 following the killing of ten French soldiers in Bône, and as Berthezène reiterated in a letter to Ibrahim, whom he declared he considered chiefly responsible, remarking that 'France would not be able to allow such a crime to go unpunished'.[46]

Two aspects of such claims seem striking. The first is that Soult blamed the inhabitants of the city for these deaths and it was the city and its people which should expect to experience French revenge for this atrocity, beginning the normalisation of the erosion of distinctions between civilians and combatants in Algeria. Relatedly, the death of these soldiers was described as a 'crime' rather than an act of war, suggestive of the French assumption that their occupation of Algeria was in effect a police operation rather than a war. This was reinforced by the French use of the term 'assassinat' ('murder') when describing the killings of French troops by locals.[47]

Yet as Paul Raynal was to write in his letters from the colony in 1830, the French found themselves fighting a war 'without laws' against:

> Terrible Bedouins, who would behead a man with a ferocity which is hard to imagine. Men who should be judged by the fact that while in the heat of combat they might content themselves with taking a prisoner and then slicing his head from his body, they prefer to take their time: beginning by removing the fingers, then cutting off the ears, then slashing the neck in a form of bloody tattooing, and finally removing the nose. Only when their victim has ceased suffering will they remove his head. One of our men was returned to us having endured a good part of this treatment. His fingers remained, his neck and his nose were patched together at the hospital, but his ears were left on the field of battle.[48]

Reading of such savagery, it seems understandable that many French soldiers dreamed of forms of revenge which mirrored the horrors writ upon their comrades bodies, and how violence came to be construed as a form of conversation with Algerians, for it was well understood that these were messages which were being sent to the occupiers. While such logics may in one sense seem to go against the idea that there was no war in Algeria, these notions coalesced fairly easily, for both were grounded in the suggestion that this was far from being a classical theatre of war. It was in many senses more like normal life, in which

the calm of existence might sometimes be punctured by horrific acts of criminal violence which were then punished by a retributive state.

A second framing certainty of Barbary Coast discourse which was replayed in occupied Algeria was the idea of the fundamental hostility of Islam towards Christianity. As early as May 1831, it was reported that in the revolting town of Mostaganem, the hostility which Muslims felt towards Christians was 'visible'.[49] Soon after, Mahi ed-Din and Sidi Larribi reminded caid Ibrahim, the commander of the garrison in Mostaganem, that it was his duty to fight against the Christians,[50] while in Boyer's report of 8 April, he was to include a letter from Abd el-Kader to the senior Muslims of Mostaganem exhorting them to fight under his banner against their common enemy, the Christians.[51]

The supposed entrenchment of such confessional resistance was symbolised by the idea of the holy war – 'la guerre sainte' or *jihad* – which Muslims had declared against the French in Algeria. This notion was much discussed in military dispatches, newspapers, parliament, letters and diaries at the time. It was understood to be one of the structuring realities of the occupation, for Arabs and Berbers could not but be intrinsically antagonistic towards the French because they were emblems of Christianity (an implied belief accorded the status of a fact).

Yet the more time went on, the more the reports and letters of the armée d'Afrique reveal that the idea of 'la guerre sainte' was essentially chimeric, though this is not to say that the notion lost any of its rhetorical power. For every report such as that of March 1834 which included a translated Arabic manuscript that explored the idea of holy war in Islam, there were notes such as that of August 1837 which reported that an influential Iraqi preacher, Abd el-Kader Ben Djelani, had travelled the country preaching tolerance between Muslims and Christians.[52] It was certainly not the case that French generals were especially interested in why such a cleric would propose such a position – the idea of the special treatment merited by the *dhimmi* or fellow Peoples of the Book – but their daily reality assured them that most Algerian Muslims were not motivated by an atavistic loathing of the infidel. In fact, many Arabs and Berbers seemed as comfortable living under their new white masters as they had been as subjects of earlier Muslim empires.

Crucially, French officers well understood that the idea of *jihad* was often deployed for propagandistic purposes, and that this was comprehended by many of the Muslims at whom it was directed. This was especially evident in the case of Abd el-Kader who was viewed by both the French and many tribes in Algeria as a figure who advocated 'holy war' to suit his own political purposes. As Daumas reported in July 1839,

having encouraged jihad, the Kabyles were disgusted by the manner in which this cloaked Abd el-Kader's rapacity and ambition. Arab tribes were of the same opinion, contending that the Emir preached 'holy war' in an immoderate fashion, asking 'why we should give you our money when you are simply bringing us war?'[53] Later that year, Abd el-Kader once again proposed a holy war to the Kabyle tribes around Bougie, 'though in vain at the present time' as the French noted, while the start of the following year brought news that he never ceased in his attempts to foment 'la guerre sainte'.[54]

This realistic and nuanced appreciation of the effects that calls for holy war had on the lives of the members of their tribes lies absent from dominant French descriptions of the period, and indeed histories of this moment which find an easier concentration on the drama of a war between two opposing groups, represented as Christians and Muslims, the French opposed by Abd el-Kader. The interpretative traps such dichotomies lead towards are quite apparent in the words of Jacques Frémeaux on this theme:

> In their opposition to the conquest of their country, local populations fell back on their age-old ideology of *Jihad* [...] The enemy was defined above else as a Christian [...] a member of a radically foreign community, with whom it was impossible to mix without endangering ones own beliefs, traditions and institutions, and whom it would be even more dangerous to obey. Thus religious legitimacy was to be crucial to all who sought to unite the inhabitants of the Regency capable of ensuring their independence.[55]

Although such a stark framing of the world of the early colony may seem appealing, the reality is that while such readings draw from ideas current among colonists of the 1830s, they also read such texts far too literally and ignore more pragmatic readings of this new encounter between peoples. The supposed radical foreignness of Europeans was an idea much more prevalent in the French than the Muslim mind, while there is ample evidence that resistance framed around European political concepts of countries and independence was an anachronistic imposition on a culture which operated with quite different notions of political space.

Even more recent nuanced work, such as Abdelmajid Hannoum's *Violent Modernity*, has operated with an overdetermined view of the place of religion in resistance to French rule, noting that 'In all Algerian wars – from those of Abd el-Qader – to the ones of the FLN – religion was the

motor and the battle cry against colonial domination and its ideology of modernity.'[56] While such claims seem plausible, we need to ask how great an effort has been made to distinguish between the noise of the motor and the battle cry, so as to ascertain that both really communicated the same message. On one level there is a need to take Hannoum's point that resistance was motivated by difference, but the way in which this manifested itself was far more diffuse than he acknowledges, for religion was both more and less than he suggests, or at least more nuanced than being a *jihadi* cry.[57] We see this in some of the many letters written to the French army by her foes in Algeria in the first decades of the colony, such as that penned to the Governor General by El-Berkani, one of the fiercest and apparently ideologically jihadist of all of France's foes, on 20 July 1842:

> I will keep myself to myself. I will not get mixed up in anything. I shall not work against the execution of any of your orders. Do not listen to the words of those Demons who accuse me of going against your orders. God gives his approval to good works! All will be returned and come back to God! He directs us on the right path![58]

God here is hardly a Divine who watches over one faith but not another, but is invoked as the expression of a form of trust and cultural understanding between two people whom El-Berkani feels share some kind of common understanding. He may have been a figure who was relentlessly cast as hating Christians in correspondence between French writers, but it was quite apparent that he saw religion as a form of communication when it came to engagement with his enemy.

It is equally easy to gloss over other instances of cultural fusion and engagement in Algeria in the name of sticking with a dichotomy which continues to suit many as a means of reading the period. The reality was that many tribes were as happy to deal with the French as they had been with earlier foreign powers and some evidently saw opportunities in moments of political change. Even tribes who were among the most recalcitrant of foes, such as the Beni Amer, would 'offer the French couscous, which was eaten by a stream whilst discussing the benefits which might come from a peace'.[59] Then there was the proud announcement that Algerians, in this case cavalrymen, serving in the French army, 'had begun to speak our language, each of them filling with pride and rising in stature as he said: I am French'.[60] While this was evidently a rather extreme and self-congratulatory example, it makes the point that France was by no means faced with a united, jihadist foe in Algeria.

The regional character of the conflict in Algeria was similarly inflected, for in the summer of 1840 it was noted that:

> After the capture of Miliana, the emir had learned from the newspapers that a new expedition was planned for the province of Oran, so he sent a number of messengers to the emperor of Morocco and the Bey of Tunis, not only to provide him with weapons, money and men, but also to declare war on France as a form of Muslim duty.[61]

As will be seen,[62] such calls had an instinctive appeal in some quarters in Marrakesh and, especially, Fez, but it was also well understood that the character of such pleading was primarily political and strategic rather than theological in its motivations. Abd el-Kader was after all a man who had pacted with the French and who had benefited greatly from their support for much of the period of the occupation, and he could hardly be construed as a 'resistor of the first hour', still less a puritanical cleric driven chiefly by faith rather than baser and more pragmatic desires. At the very moment that the Emir had declared a holy war on the invaders, French soldiers noted that Abd el-Kader had in fact promised a warm welcome, freedom and respect to any Christians who travelled across his territory.[63]

From the earliest days following the invasion, resistance which may have been motivated by many things acquired this religious cast, as we saw in the report that Mahi ed-Din and Sidi Larribi 'had reminded caid Ibrahim, the commander of the Turkish garrison at Mostaganem, that it was his duty to fight against the Christians'.[64] Given that almost all of the French military class in Algeria, and indeed their political masters in Paris, had almost no understanding of either Islamic history or theology, they blithely read such statements in a quite literal fashion, when more nuanced readings, based on some knowledge of the culture they encountered, might have stressed the rhetorical and propagandistic deployment of such language in encounters between Muslims and Christians since at least the late medieval era.[65]

There were of course sometimes quite simple strategic reasons as to why Algerians issued calls to arms under a religious banner which related mainly to the fractured character of tribal society in the Maghreb. While Islam saw no sense in nations or borders among men, the idea of the *umma*, or the united faith, served as a form of national unification for diverse and often rival groupings, made especially complicated by the fact that those who resisted in Algeria also sought to draw Moroccans and Tunisians into their conflict. Religion was the only

banner under which such disparate groups could effectively unite, but it by no means followed that French readings of the genuine hostility which Muslims felt for Christians implied that the French operated in an environment of instinctive confessional enmity. That much should have been proven by the fact that many tribes and their leaders were willing to pact with the French, expressing no qualms at the idea of allying themselves with Christians, so the suspicion remains that Islamist rhetoric tended to be used by the French to impose a simple and convenient narrative on a situation was actually rather more complex.

Thus in April 1833, Boyer reported that a letter from Abd el-Kader to the 'greats' of Mostaganem had been captured and translated, 'exhorting them to rally under his banner against their common enemy, the Christians'.[66] One must suspect that the power of this form of captured communication had more force than that of a letter seized just a few months later in which the Bey of Constantine wrote to all the 'tribes under French domination to demand they march against the French'.[67] Rather perversely, many in the French army preferred not be viewed as French, for being seen as Christians added a certain sheen of grandeur to the invasion, though as compared with many instances of imperialism it in fact had almost no religious dimension on the French side in the 1830s and '40s (there were almost no missions in Algeria at this time and even the ideology of French civilisational imperialism was rarely expressed in religious language).

As the 1830s unfolded, however, and as the conflict with Abd el-Kader came to be described as the centrepiece of the military engagement in Algeria, Bugeaud and his commanders became increasingly dogmatic in their insistence that they were engaging a foe who believed himself to be fighting a 'guerre sainte' against them. Thus in December 1839, Abd el-Kader was reported to have been 'preaching holy war amongst the Kabyle tribes around Bougie', though a note added 'this has been in vain until now', which suggested a pragmatic response to such calls for jihad.[68] The following month, it was reported that 'Abd el-Kader would not stop in his attempts to whip the tribes up into a state of holy war'.[69] In the summer of 1840, 'the emir, following the fall of Miliana and having read in the newspapers of the planned French expedition in the province of Oran, had sent a series of letters to the emperor of Morocco and the Bey of Tunis so as to try to persuade them not only to supply him with weapons, money and men, but also to declare war on France in the name of supporting Islam'.[70] As we have seen, this was rather given the lie by promises of welcome and protection to Christians in Algeria.[71]

Such accounts habitually ignore the details of everyday engagements between the French and the various groups who inhabited Algeria, which were often of a more positive character, along with the popularity of ideas of empire that stressed potential rapprochements which might take place between the two groups (and the value this would have for France).[72] Such models certainly did not fit the idea of an empire of assimilation which would emerge later in the century, but they undercut the notion that an entrenched form of crusading was utterly dominant in the days of the early colony. The development of such bifurcated ideas was in some senses a product of a rejection of gradualism, legalism and their variants which had admitted a certain capacity for coexistence.

A third key frame through which the early Algerian settlement was viewed was the idea that an innovative form of war was being enjoined in Africa. The novelty of this conflict was then used as a means to explain the new ways in which France engaged with local peoples and the tactics which came to be construed as being appropriate to this unique theatre of combat. This was after all a 'petite guerre' of the type which served as a case study, along with Russian operations in the Caucasus and the British in Afghanistan, in Callwell's *Small Wars* of 1896.[73] As Frémeaux noted, a degree of uncertainty inhered to the legal, political and terminological status of the 'war' from the outset given that 'Algerian combatants were only rarely described as enemies and much more usually referred to as "Arabs" or "Kabyles", as though their national or ethnic origins sufficed to explain their being foes'.[74] With its brutal campaigning seasons there was also the question as to whether this was not a neo-medieval conflict rather than the first modern war.

As well as being much discussed in current writing, this notion also loomed large in literature from the 1830s and '40s, which often paired the idea of the unaccustomed qualities of the conquest with its potential interminability. One such example is Eugène Buret's work of 1842, *Question d'Afrique: De la double conquête de l'Algérie par la guerre et la colonisation*, an unexceptional entry in debates on the future governance of the colony.[75] Like many such texts, Buret raised the spectre that Algeria might never be conquered and that it could be destined to become 'an eternal combat without victory, an endless struggle against fatigue, fever and death', but unlike many naysayers he insisted that victory could be won so long as it was acknowledged that this was 'a war like no others'.[76] 'Nothing was easy in Africa and even with the best system in place, a definitive success might take quite some time.'[77]

The unique nature of this struggle was primarily the result of the inhospitable environment which faced the French, both in terms of its

landscapes and 'the character and habits of the *indigènes*', who were a 'slippery and fluid enemy' who needed to be fought in the form of a 'furious hunt or chase'.[78] According to Ducuing, a contemporary, 'In truth this was not really a campaign where one needed to combat an enemy but a hunt in which those foes needed to be tracked down.'[79] This animalisation of the Algerian foe and a concomitant equation of men with nature was quite typical, for it seemed understandable that locals should be dogged, rugged, hardy foes, given the environment in which they lived. Buret also hinted that the army's difficulty in distinguishing between combatants and civilians was an inconvenience brought by locals upon themselves (for they could surely find few reasons to complain when soldiers behaved as though such distinctions did not matter).

The subhuman character of France's foes implied that the French, as humans, needed to find new modes of combat, for 'The people whom we want to submit resemble nature's imperfections; arrested in their development, they are without those noble organs on which life is centred'.[80] 'The occupation in Africa needed therefore, to modify itself according to the nature of the land and the level of socialisation of the peoples who lived there.'[81]

The unique character of this engagement was made equally plain in the tactics displayed by local peoples, for 'The Arabs did not seriously challenge our possession of the land by opposing force with force; instead preventing us from tranquilly settling down with attacks which were no more than marauding and brigandage'.[82]Among other things, such words were telling for the manner in which the Arab was absented even as he was figured in prose, for here we read not of 'their land' but 'the land' and the narrowness of the French imagination is revealed in the manner in which Ducuing is certain that Algerian attacks on French troop are a form of 'brigandage'. No possibility is admitted that such actions could be a form of self-defence or a chaotic attempt at stemming the tide of an invasion conceived of as a malign revolution in Algerian society. That Ducuing does not reflect on the fact that Algerians were unable to 'oppose with force' is revealing of the general tendency to overestimate the scale of potential resistance to French forces, explained here by his assertion that when opposition was mounted it was of an extraordinary and therefore fearful character.

For Ducuing the difference of local cultures (as compared with a European arbiter) is that 'they are not possessed of centres of population which are indispensable to their existence; thus the loss of their villages

is a blow only for those who live in them'.[83] What is offered here is something of a summation of the textualisation of violence in the colony, for while we know that attacks on villages tended to be extraordinarily brutal affairs, this aggression was both explained and in some senses motivated by a social scientific universe of facts, assumptions and theories about the nature of the peoples being attacked. Atomised tribal societies were unlike national cultures (if France could truly be thought to be such a thing), so the brutal treatment of local peoples was in some sense diminished by its lacking in any more general meaning. The inconvenient character of local cultures led directly to a set of policies which moved beyond the piecemeal targeting of villages, for only forms of assault which assailed the whole society (which in fact constituted fragmented forms of life into a recognisable society) would stand a chance of success: 'The only means of finishing with the Arabs is to attack them through the earth which gives them life, through their harvests and their pastures, since it is not possible to attack them as persons.'[84] Thus the equation in which man is naturalised reaches its end point as the Arab merges into nature and is destroyed only through a more complete assault on the environment.

Ducuing wrote in defense of those who were the easy targets of Bugeaud's Parisian critics:

> Civilised or not, we ought to reply in support of general Bugeaud, all wars aspire to submit an invaded country. What can one do with an enemy who wishes neither to submit nor to fight? At the very least one needs to force him to make a choice; but how do you enforce such measures? When one invades his land, he flees and flight is neither submission nor combat. When we leave him be, it is he who will ambush you, attack your convoys and besiege your garrisons. Not being able to reach him directly, it is better to do so through his property, which is his harvest, his herds. Yet once he has gathered his harvest, he moves his herds on and travels far to sow once more, for the earth lies expansively before him ['la terre est grand devant lui']. If you allow him to save his harvest and allow him to keep his herds, he laughs in the face of your good faith. Between the seasons of sowing and harvest, he will bow before you and swear submission, but once he has hidden his grain in his silos, he regains his horse and takes up his gun once more. One might then pursue him again, but to do so will be a form of endless repetition such that the war will be made interminable.[85]

Buret and Ducuing's idea that the struggle in Algeria might potentially be interminable if new, regionally appropriate, modes of combat were not found is a notion which has surprising currency in modern secondary literatures which stress the seeming endlessness of the war in North Africa. Bouda Etemad, for instance, writes that 'The conquest of Algeria was long and difficult',[86] M. Michel has analysed 'Une guerre interminable' and Benjamin Stora alleged that 'The French army faced strong resistance. Within the country, religious sects called for a holy war.'[87] Such claims have in a sense cohered to become an uncontested backdrop to the story of the First Algerian War, yet there are compelling reasons for thinking that they rely on a somewhat uncritical reading of only very specific types of sources from the 1830s and '40s. Indeed, a case can be made that the 'interminable', 'long and difficult' struggle in which 'The French army faced strong resistance' was essentially chimeric and a poor description of the encounters between soldiers and Indigènes at this moment. While Stora's assertion, for instance, appears plausible, a more critical review of the period ought to ask whether his use of the term 'country' is in any sense adequate in terms of framing the space of French operations in the period before an Algerian national space was completed, while we have seen that the 'holy war' which was invoked by Islamists at this moment was a far more complex, nuanced and often rhetorical device than would seem to be the case in his plain invocation of an idea of *jihad*.

Intriguingly such doubts were raised in the 1840s, as we see in texts such as Eugène Bodichon's 1845 essay 'Pourquoi la guerre a-t-elle été interminable?'[88] Bodichon was far from an objective witness to events in the colony, for he was a leading voice in the anti-militarist camp which argued that the army should cede control to civilian administrators. He was, however, no *arabophile*, and his views on the problem of the Indigènes tended more towards the overtly exterminatory than even men such as Bugeaud.[89]

Bodichon's view was that the idea of 'the interminable war' was a political construct which served the interests of the Army in Africa, who were destined to retain control of the colony so long as it was seen to be in a state of war, and those political interests in Paris who were convinced by the generals' arguments that only the Army could truly create a secure and meaningful national colonial space. The strategic value of this endless warring also served metropolitan political purposes, for 'the government, feeling constrained by "the national sentiment", set out to delay colonisation in lieu of the creation of an interminable war' (a view later supported by Le Cour Grandmaison).[90]

This ceaseless conflict evidently demanded a single, dastardly foe, particularly if it were to serve this variety of political purposes – a role played by Abd el-Kader, who Bodichon believed had effectively been created by the army in Africa. He was therefore 'aggrandised' by the military–political complex and in effect 'given a position as a sovereign (implying some sense of parity in this war between European and African royal houses), while we helped him to create a regular army'.[91] This 'fils de nos œuvres', Bodichon bemoaned, 'has already cost us millions of francs and thousands of men',[92] while:

> In effect, when Abd el-Kader began to raise a standard for the Arab race, it remained simple for us to put him down, or, at the very least, to reduce to the role of a mere tribal chief. This would scarcely have taken a great deal of diplomatic effort, for all we would have to have done would been to not have extinguished, to his advantage, those local rivals who were rising up against him. The armies of Mustapha-ben-Ismaël, the insurrections of the tribes of Oran, and the league formed against him by the desert-dwellers of Angad, had reduced his power to a mere shell. It is incontrovertible that he would have succumbed at that moment had we not come to his aid and if, through our moral ascendancy and our force of arms, we had not stayed the blows of his enemies.[93]

Strange though such claims seem, for they work against one of the key tropes of the instant military histories of the 1840s and almost all subsequent scholarship on Algeria, they were far from unusual at the time they were penned. Far from being a new and unique form of conflict, the war in Algeria began to 'develop in the form of a typically European struggle which would last a number of years'.[94] In fact, 'if one followed the actions of the government in Algeria, it was impossible not to conclude that they wanted an interminable war'.[95] As Bodichon asked:

> Was this endless war maintained with the aim of channelling the bellicosity of the French? Did it simply provide a training ground for the army, a form of schooling? Or was it a form of preparation for colonisation? Here on the ground, we think otherwise, for those of us who are helping to build the place believe that the system served purely dynastic interests and the needs of the privileged few.[96]

In a very simple sense, this argument was no more than a continuation of the much more commonly held belief that the Algerian conquest had

begun as nothing more than a frippery which served royal interests, and that confusion had reigned in the early years of the colony precisely because there had been no meaningful logic underpinning its acquisition. Bodichon's extension of this argument to the 1840s was based on his belief that a process of militarisation was underway both at home and abroad, a view scarcely dispelled by the events of 1848.[97]

Yet in the case of the first two decades of the French occupation of Algeria, there is a more fundamental question to be posed which is whether there really was war at that moment. The overriding and unquestioned assumption of contemporary literatures in the 1830s and '40s and subsequent histories was that the armée d'Afrique conquered Algeria in a war, yet we have already seen that the novelty and supposed intractability of this conflict engendered uncertainties as to quite where Algeria sat in the canon of warfare.

The conventions of writing about confrontations between peoples, and about violence, through the genre of the history of war induce a certain sense of comfort for the generic expectations, forms and shorthand of military history frame and answer a series of questions even before considering the specificities of the particular case. Once ensconced in the genre, we quickly and reassuringly frame the past with a vocabulary of battles, conquest, treaties, marches, sieges and victories, confident that such markers are expressive of an overarching order in which opposed foes fight for temporal and spatial dominance. This is assured only when pacification leads to defeat, surrender and capitulation. It is well understood that wars are special moral realms in which different forms of ethics apply both to historical actors and our narration of their behaviour. A simple dichotomy, after all, marks the division between wars and peacetime in which the legitimacy of killing delineates a clear border between these two domains.

Yet might it be the case that in Algeria, as elsewhere in the past, it is the exploration of the unasked question which lies as a presumption sitting behind all of our knowledge of a period, which ought to be voiced? Wittgenstein talked of such things as belonging to 'the *scaffolding* of our thoughts',[98] arguing that we ought to interrogate those propositions which seem 'exempt from doubt',[99] for 'Much seems to be fixed, and is removed from the traffic. It is so to speak shunted onto an unused siding.'[100] It is precisely the question as to whether there was a war in early colonial Algeria that this book entertains, seeking to undermine the certainty of such a claim through detailed examinations of the ways in which participants described their encounters in Algeria, the human and material costs of the conflict, the role which Abd el-Kader played

in a narrative of war, those new forms of hostility which were devised in Algeria and the implicit question as to whether this time ought to be viewed more through the lens of the history of violence than that of military history.

Are we sure, as Abou-Hamseen's title has it, that this was *The First French-Algerian War (1830–1848)*.[101] 'Fought', as Benjamin Brower suggests, 'against a broad range of Algerian opposition, France's victory resulted in control of the northern lands of Algeria, a place known as the Tell.'[102] Might our views of this moment change if we discovered that many of the key actors in this story suggested that there had in fact been no war in Algeria at that moment? Or if some went as far as to suggest that the language and scaffolding of war was in some ways no more than a convenient political fiction which justified certain forms of governance and repression? Given that the very historic status of the First Algerian War depended upon its 'asymmetric' qualities, in which innovative forms of counterinsurgency were developed to subdue civilian populations, might it not be the case that the language and frames of the history of war are unhelpful modes of narrating the history of the early Algerian colony?

One thing both contemporary sources and later historians such as Ageron and Julien are agreed upon is that the early colony was a confusing place. Algeria had been attacked and acquired in a state of some uncertainty and the first decade of French rule was marked by both intellectual and bureaucratic turmoil as competing interest groups fought to define what the colony *was for* (and indeed against the plural voices in France which advocated a swift end to the Algerian experiment). As a leading general put it in 1837, 'Since the destruction of the dey of Algiers, France has asked what it ought to make of the Regency.'[103] Metropolitan audiences demanded meaning from new imperial possessions, which in many senses provided a tremendous opportunity for groups such as soldiers and doctors to generate easily comprehended explanatory models which explained how a colony had come into being, how it should be made and what it would contribute to France.

As generals fought with civilian administrators, as advocates of 'restrained occupation' battled with supporters of 'total domination', as traders, colonists, soldiers and dreamers concocted visions of what Algeria should become, there was a certain reassuring, grounding reality to the idea that war was forging a sound base for these varied futures. Fighting to extend the range of French control, and indeed more fully securing its dominance in areas which it had notionally conquered, was the bedrock on which the colony would be built. War increased the

French grip on the Maghreb, soldiers made this more certain, and it was therefore understandable that they believed their answers should hold more weight in answering 'the Algerian Question' and that all parties should in some ways begin to refract the meaning of colonial debate through military lenses. The army could not, of course, countenance the idea that it was doing anything other than fighting a war, and given the massive predominance of the army in the early colony – and the fact that for most soldiers fighting war was of course their *raison d'être* – it seems understandable that the idea of war came to serve as the foundation, the very reality, of this moment.

For the army wars were, after all, events charged with heroism, sacrifice and comradeship, and were understood to be infused with such values by the soldiers who fought in them, as military correspondence from the period reveals (along with later histories which to varying degrees display a nationalist desire to valorise the actions of the fallen).[104] Such moral exemplars were of narrative value above and beyond their own actions, as was made plain in a letter Bugeaud written in July 1842:

> The Army and our Citizens will long remember the heroic actions of the 22 brave men commanded by Sergeant Blandan who, on 11 April between Mered and Bouffarick, preferred to die [in battle] rather than to capitulate before a multitude of Arabs. The enthusiasm which this greatness has occasioned is still keenly felt, and I have no interest in developing it still further; but the admiration of the men's contemporaries is not enough, for it must be shared with future generations, for in memorialising such an event many more will prefer a glorious death to the humiliation of the French flag.[105]

Such rhetoric was the centrepiece of an appeal for subscriptions towards the cost of the erection of a statue memorialising the actions of these brave men, revealing the great tendency towards the almost instantaneous historicising of events in this milieu (Hannoum wrote of historiography becoming 'the dominant mode of colonial knowledge' after 1871, but this surely came into being rather earlier[106]). Such artworks were supplemented by memoirs, histories, travel books, diaries, pamphlets, paintings and journalism which rather than seeking to find historical meaning through a sense of perspective and distance claimed to locate it in the moral values and immediacy of its own moment. This modern record was but one part of a temporal canopy stretched atop the Maghreb in ideologically driven histories, meshing, for instance, with

the logic of deep histories of North Africa which alleged that its Fall from the path of the telos had taken place at the end of the classical era, when barbaric Muslims had replaced the progressive rule of northern Mediterranean Romans and Greeks.[107] The influence of such paths of meaning, right up to our own times, should not be underestimated, for history is of course an accretive pursuit, in which the novelty of discoveries in new works tends to overlook their reliance on a set of structures and assumptions which underlie a particular genre of writing. This is certainly true of the emphases of French colonial history, where the story of the colonist has always seemed far more attractive and meaningful than that of colonised subjects.[108] More broadly, change, difference and confusion are of course compelling themes for the historian.

Yet epistemic doubts about the very nature of the conflict in North Africa were not restricted to critics of the army, such as Bodichon. Even the architect of the new warfare, Bugeaud, found himself declaring that 'We find ourselves fighting a mere simulacrum of war' in the summer of 1840.[109] Indeed, such views and language were by no means original. In 1837 Berlié had described the pacification of the East as 'nothing but a chimera', while the very idea of war was often questioned.[110] In 1837, for instance, it was separately reported that for the government 'war was seen as merely a means to obtain peace', while months later the very idea that war had been enjoined was queried in the assertion that 'the occupation of the country in preparation for war is one of the most important questions for the future of Algeria'.[111] That same year Brossard reported on the 'nonchalance and laziness of the troops who made up the armée d'Afrique'.[112]

When Bugeaud wrote his words from the heat of the city, did he mean, as seems most obvious, that up until this point the French army had not truly pursued war in the manner in which Europeans would have imagined on their continent? Was he referring to the high command's preference for peace treaties over battles? Was he thinking of the much greater number of French soldiers who died from strange diseases, drink and self-harm than in combat? Was there an essential lack of satisfaction and clarity in the piecemeal and unplanned nature of the conquest of Algeria? Less than a generation before, Napoleon's troops had fought their way across most of the European continent in a matter of months, yet the French army now found it impossible to definitively subdue a divided African regency over the course of a decade.[113]

There was, however, a second possibility, which was that in speaking of a 'simulacrum of war' Bugeaud was also registering some level of disgust or disdain with the paths that had hitherto been followed

in the Algerian theatre. Wars, after all, were understood to be events in which professional armies of men fought one another in order to assert dominance and achieve strategic goals, whereas it was plain that while the French army may have displayed its customary rigour and vigour in the Maghreb, this was as likely to have been directed towards civilian populations or the confiscation of their goods, as it was to have been expended in battle with France's enemies. A simulacrum of hostility was a weak and dishonourable pursuit as compared with the moral values of true and just war.

Yet was even Bugeaud sure of himself in this regard? He had, after all, arrived in Algeria as a general charged with rooting out arbitrary brutality and confused policymaking. He understood his mission to be one in which sense, order and purpose would be imposed on the army and the colony more generally, but would this be achieved by truly bringing war to Algeria or by fighting that war according to the norms expected of combatants in Europe? Bugeaud would of course discover that such principled questions were framed by the realities of Algeria, most especially the difficulty of subduing vast territories with a poorly trained and scarcely motivated army, little of which could be trusted to have any sense of what constituted war's true likeness as opposed to its simulacrum.

We gather from Bugeaud's words that aside from his concern with operational objectives, he should have liked to have pursued a war in the true sense of the word, and it should perhaps be this aspiration by which we judge his management of the conflict in the years 1841–47 when he served as Governor General. While there was no doubt that the character of hostilities changed under the aegis of Bugeaud, a tension seems to have emerged between the aspiration to truly begin combat operations in Africa and the goal of fighting something approximating the old European soldierly idea of a just war. It became questionable as to whether both of these aims could be achieved in Algeria and, of course, if one had to make a choice between them one would necessarily elect to win than to be just. Seven years after his original pronouncement, Bugeaud felt able to pronounce that 'Today, one can confirm that the conquest of Algeria has been completed',[114] but how was this achieved?

Some have suggested that the resolution of this dilemma created a new type of war in the Maghreb, one which would have world historical consequences for its influence would spread through the empires of the nineteenth century and into the colonial wars of the twentieth and even the twenty-first centuries, but did Bugeaud's methods allow him

to transcend the simulacrum of war with which he was faced when he arrived in Algeria? And do we understand the ways in which this form of conflict bore within it the likeness and the unlikeness of the old ways of warfare?

At the very height of his campaigning, in February 1843, Bugeaud wrote to Soult in a fashion which suggested that his activities still scarcely constituted war in its proper sense, writing of his foes:

> I am not able to say that its power has been wholly annihilated, for it is too slippery and our own material disadvantage so great, that I can only dare to say that it will be finished off in the following campaign. This conclusion should perhaps be seen as being of its moment, yet what I do not fear guaranteeing is the fact that it will be reduced little by little and that a portion of our troops will be sufficient to continue this small war which it will be necessary to continue. The rest of our troops can be used on the building and infrastructure projects which I've proposed and which will definitively render us control over the country. From Chélif to Jurjura, and throughout Algeria, a great tranquillity reigns.[115]

This specific invocation of fighting 'la petite guerre' and Bugeaud's contention that the conquest was taking place more through the construction of bridges and roads reflect an underlying admission in French military thinking, which it was often impolitic to voice, especially when resources and funds were being requested from the metropole. Similar sentiments can, nonetheless, be found across other documents, most commonly in the much-repeated expression 'une grande tranquilité règne partout', which as a cliché served as an adjunct to the claim that French violence 'offered a moral lesson' to Arabs and Kabyles. In April 1842, Négrier, among the fiercest of all French generals, was forced to admit to Soult how few were the threats he faced, suggesting that just one troublesome Indigène (Zerdoud) 'truly fought any kind of war in the province, which for me proves that peace is becoming more and more entrenched such that it seems likely that in the course of this year I will have no more need of the use of force'.[116] Later that year, Bugeaud himself was to write to the Minister to charge that 'The army has not simply been the means of effecting the Conquest, but must be used to make something of it.'[117] Strikingly this claim that the army should function as a permanent form of government was based on the claim that as an institution it had 'become much freer following the ending of all serious hostilities' by the summer of 1842.

In such circumstances it does not therefore seem strange that Soult questioned whether any sorties should be undertaken which carried any risk of endangering French lives. In March 1843 he wrote to Bugeaud to suggest that 'while I know that one cannot make war without suffering some casualties, might our officers not take more precautions so as to avoid pointless missions and not to risk the lives of their men unless absolutely necessary'.[118] Soult had noticed that 'a number of these officers undertake exercises without any real value', again confirming the notion that this was hardly a war in the sense that lives and military force needed to be relentlessly deployed against an enemy against whom one competed for territory and supremacy.

Yet even after that point in 1847 at which Bugeaud admitted that hostilities had ceased, the invocation of the idea of potential war remained an important political tool for the Governor General and the armée d'Afrique, for the success of their occupation of the country evidently depended on the metropole continuing to believe that the colony was at least potentially imperilled. As Bugeaud wrote:

> Although all of the news despatched from across the Division of Algiers suggests that the Arab tribes remain in the calm and tranquil state seen across these past two years, I believe it also to equally necessary to point out the potential consequences of the sending home of troops, or even whole columns, given the possibility of a general uprising of a kind which the past has provided plenty of examples.[119]

Such fearmongering was rather given the lie by more detailed reports from the Cercles that same summer which describe a state of calm which manifested itself in across almost every aspect of relations and life in the Province:

> Tranquillity reigns throughout the Province of Algiers [...] The work of the harvest has been finished amongst almost all of the tribes and the markets are now becoming better furnished with grains [...] where transactions between the Arabs and the Europeans are taking place with great mutual confidence.[120]

Meanwhile, in the Province of Oran in the same month in which Bugeaud wrote, Tellmann, head of the Bureaux Arabes, wrote to the Minister to report that:

All of our documentation presents a picture of a hugely satisfying picture across the division. A great peace reigns over all; general wellbeing subsists among the tribes, among whom the appearance of poverty has ended. Not a single instance of disorder or crime has been reported for a month; the roads afford safe passage, taxes are being paid and a sense of reciprocity has built up between the European and Indigenous populations. The work of the harvest continues apace, while the price of grains has fallen in a controlled fashion, and those chiefs we have appointed acquit their roles with zeal and intelligence. In the subdivision of Mascara, many of them have built houses and caravanserails aside market-places. All of this therefore serves to offer the hope that we will soon be reaping the rewards of our great efforts in this country.[121]

3
L'armée d'Afrique

This chapter describes a series of key features of the world of the armée d'Afrique in the 1830s and '40s. It begins by tracking the growing number of soldiers sent to Algeria across the period, before moving on to look at statistical records that measure their suffering in and out of combat. Having shown that very few of the army died in battle, it then goes on to suggest that the central figure in French accounts of the resistance they faced – Abd el-Kader – was as much a fiction as he was a true threat to France, created in a coalescence of the Emir's desire for self-aggrandisement and the French need for a recognisable enemy. A consideration then follows of the variety of other threats – from England, Morocco, Tunisia, the Ottomans and others – which helped to shape French policy in the Maghreb, along with an analysis of both the armée's oft-noticed dreams of military colonialism and its less-mentioned aspiration to control North Africa through economic means, most notably through projects of infrastructure and the establishment of an autarkic domination of supply and demand.

A numerical reckoning

The blunt numerical reality of the occupation of Algeria in its first two decades was that a very large and expensive military presence was established in Africa, though the cost in French battlefield casualties was relatively slight.

Initial royal estimates for the size of the army which would be needed to subjugate Algeria were small, with a projected force of 10,000 men.[1] By April 1833, this figure had almost trebled to 29,202 soldiers, which reflected either the scale of the extension of France's ambitions once she had arrived on the African continent or the tenacity of the resistance her

army purported to face.[2] This latter suggestion was advanced by officers in Oran in January 1834, who claimed that persistent Arab rebellions could be put down only if reinforcements were sent to the province.[3]

A slight creep in numbers upwards was confirmed in July 1834 when the size of the force had reached around 31,000 men, though the tensions this induced were equally plain in the budgetary demand that the size of the army be reduced to 23,300 soldiers.[4] The frustration which opponents of the Algerian adventure, and proponents of limited or restrained occupation, felt was considerable at this time, for budgets and limits on troop numbers set in Paris seemed to mean little on the ground. By the summer of 1836, the more realistic figure of 31,250 was worked with, which was to be made up of 26,000 soldiers, with the remainder made up of central command, the administration and the indigenous spahis and zouaves.[5] Soon after, however, it became apparent that troop numbers had in fact reached 29,400 by this point, with some in Paris 'indicating to Clauzel that this figure could be elevated to 32,500', though the official government line was that Clauzel's desire for extra troops and his strategy of 'absolute domination' were to be resisted, with the line drawn at 30,000 troops.[6]

This particular number came to symbolise a supposed bind or form of circular logic which served the generals in Algiers well, for having chosen to expand beyond the capital to establish some semblance of a colonial state which went beyond Ottoman imperial penetration, the soldiers were then able to argue that the numbers of fighters at their disposal was insufficient for the achievement of such a goal. As one general wrote in September 1836, now that 17 outposts had been established across the country, the reality was that only 2500 men were available in the capital to be sent to resist any attacks, 'and thus after six years, the despatch of 30,000 men and having spent thirty million francs on the occupation only of the coast of the country, France was faced with a situation where she could only sustain things as they were, losing territory, for it to then be regained, with no hope of this changing in the future'.[7]

The reality of this presentation of this state of affairs as an impasse which would need to be breached if France were to truly establish a colony was that, by a mixture of stealth and design, the size of the French army rapidly increased in the period 1836–40. By July of 1840, a French officer attached to the French embassy in Constantinople wryly noted that the army 'is now double the size of the force which Clauzel demanded, and which was then so stubbornly resisted' (in other words, at least 65,000 men).[8] This was expressive of the realities of power

relations between the Paris and Algiers, with the government seemingly unable to stem the flow of funds and men to the colony. 'So long as you wish to make this place French', the military argument went, 'you will need to give us what we need to make it so, for it is we who live and die to make your dream a reality.'

Unsurprisingly such views were forcefully articulated by Bugeaud, who threatened to resign in August 1841 if the government dared to reduce troop numbers, though the truer reality of the power dynamics of the situation were revealed that month when Paris contended that it would under no circumstances allow the size of the army to reach 100,000 men.[9] To make just two comparisons, this was more than three times the numbers of soldiers which had been countenanced just five years earlier and 24,000 men greater than the British military presence in India in 1913 (occupying a country which was 56 times more populous[10]).

In some senses it did not matter how circular, ambiguous or contradictory were the arguments of men such as Bugeaud, for so long as France wished to remain in Algeria the army could not be denied. In July 1842, the Governor General maintained that because he feared that France 'had neither the will or the intelligence [to withdraw from Algeria], the army necessarily needed to be maintained at a level of 750,000–80,000 men'.[11] This was of course a wholly disingenuous argument, for Bugeaud was in no sense the reactive servant proposed in this equation but by this point a forceful proponent of absolute domination and the extension of the Algerian colony. A truer picture of his standpoint was made plain in May of the following year, when Bugeaud argued that troop numbers should not be reduced below 100,000 'because we must conquer Africa, hold onto it, colonize and settle ourselves forever'.[12] The Governor General thereby revealed his true priority which was the military colonisation of the country. Tellingly, this particular intervention came in a discussion of the fact that the army was engaged both in the fighting of war and the engineering of a nation through projects of road and bridge-building. It was imperative for Bugeaud to be able to argue that troops were primarily needed for the rigours of the former apparently massive military effort, rather than the practical needs of the construction of an army colony.

A detailed consideration of correspondence between Paris and Algiers through the 1840s reveals the mixture of threats, cajoling and dissimulation which Bugeaud deployed in his correspondence with Soult to ensure that troop levels were kept at the levels he desired. The success of all three of these tactics is apparent in a set of letters from

April 1842, in which the Governor General began by bemoaning the decision to return the class of 1835 to France, a decision forced upon Soult by the 'demands of the finance law'.[13] 'This decision', Bugeaud blustered, 'has left me deeply distressed, in part because I am close to ending this ruinous war which we have undertaken.' At that moment, however, Bugeaud claimed the situation in Algeria to be 'menacing', writing that:

> On this occasion, I note that your letter of 26 March, which was dated two days after that in which you requested the recall of the class of 1835, you sent me details of M. Le Rioux's telegram in which he sent news that the Emperor of Morocco was sending both arms and money to Abd el Kader, while numerous tribes from the Riff valley were attaching themselves to his cause, and that arms and munitions were also being sent from London and Lisbon. That this news came after your decision of the 24th, gave me cause to wonder whether you regretted your original decision and I thought that I should not be surprised if your next letter was to give me authorisation to keep my men here.[14]

Such an argument, which compounded the supposed threat of Abd el-Kader with the dangers posed to the French empire both by Morocco and rival European powers, was a classic summary of the form of compilation of strategic fears which Bugeaud knew worked well in persuading Soult, who we should suspect was also alive to the role which both men played in this game. This much was clear in the Minister's reply of 30 April in which he stated that he understood that withdrawing troops at that moment seemed impolitic given 'that the spring campaign will begin soon and in recognition of the fact that Abd el Kader was seeking to reconstitute his power in Tlemcen so as to fight a new war, in which many Moroccan adventurers would seek to join him'.[15] Soult then contended that he had only sought to repatriate troops 'so as to conform with legislatory demands which were imposed upon me', and as proof of his true loyalties, he had found additional funds to send two new battalions to Algeria. 'You will see therefore', he wrote, 'that I have not lost sight of the fact that a new campaigning season is beginning, nor of events on the border by Tlemcen.' What is more, the closing lines of Soult's letter revealed even better news for Bugeaud, for the Minister had found a way for the class of 1835 to remain in Algeria for one more season, though he claimed to be insistent that there was an absolute necessity that they should then be sent home.

Our capacity to definitively assess the scale of French military losses in the period 1830–45, and to therefore interrogate the army's suggestion that the severity of the war in Algeria served as justification for devolving its future to the military, is limited. Nonetheless, with the aid of existing statistical reckonings and a series of new measures drawn from the army's own archival records, a series of observations can be made regarding the great gap between the supposed savagery of the Franco-Algerian War and its realities.

Famously, far more soldiers died of disease, exhaustion, suicide and alcoholism than in combat in Algeria, with Etemad estimating an attrition rate of between 7 and 9% annually of an army whose average size was around 50–55,000 men in the period 1830–48.[16] Such mortality rates were significantly lower than in later French colonial ventures in Indochina and Madagascar, albeit sustained over a longer period of campaigning.[17] They were also much less than the 95,000 who died in the Crimean War or the 140,000 dead of the Franco-Prussian War.[18] Etemad reckons around 85,000 perished in the period 1830–57, while Headrick adjudges that 27,787 men were killed in combat over the equivalent period, which would suggest that between 75 and 80% of French casualties died away from the battleground.[19] Ducuing concurred that only one-tenth of French fatalities were sustained in battle, while Frémeaux admits that 'deaths in battle were relatively slight'.[20]

As far as the French army was concerned, an apt statistical comparison might have been made with the losses of the Napoleonic wars, in which the army and its allies sustained battleground losses of 371,000, with 800,000 dying of disease, alongside the deaths of 600,000 civilians.[21] The comparison between such figures and Headrick's estimate – which suggests that around a thousand Frenchmen died in battle each year between 1830 and 1857 – certainly seemed striking to French soldiers in Algeria, and such comparisons would have been still more arresting if it could be established that Headrick's figures are likely to overestimate the scale of French combat losses in Algeria.

For instance, in consulting military records from the period we find that in a year such as 1841 – one of the bloodiest of the period – 349 men died in combat, which was only around a third as great as the number of soldiers who had died (914) in the hospitals of Constantine alone that year.[22] While that latter figure included fatally wounded soldiers, an examination of a sample of military engagements in the period 1831–43 suggests a lower working reckoning than that offered by Headrick.

Using Jean Nicot and Pascal Carré's aggregation of the army's records from the period, we are able to identify 28 battles or short campaigns

from the period for which casualty figures were offered for both the French army and her foes. In these engagements, there were a total of 916 French losses as against 7287 enemy combatants; in most cases, the proportion of deaths was closer to 10:1; and in only two of the 28 encounters did the French sustain greater losses than their foes, one of which was the 'disaster of Macta' in 1835.

While critics of the army suggested that the numbers of enemy combatants slain were routinely exaggerated for propaganda purposes, it ought to be noted that these records were drawn from internal documentation rather than those broadcast by the *Moniteur* and other media. What they appear to show is that while military encounters in Algeria were indeed bloody, they were invariably one-sided with relatively small losses sustained by the French army, certainly as compared with more traditional European wars. In fact, in some years it is very difficult to find any real evidence of the army having sustained casualties in battle.[23]

This certainly accords with the stance of the very first statistical study of the period, J.M.C. Boudin's 1853 *Histoire statistique de la colonisation en Algérie*, in which he suggested that 'French combat losses were minimal', making up less than 5% of the total victims in the conflict.[24] As he remarked, 'The French officers were in the habit of making fun of a conflict that cost so little', while for officers the risks were even more slight, for while 'the soldiers bent in the harness and, exhausted by the marches, paid the heavy toll exacted by disease, the mounted officers, less fatigued and better fed and cared for, had very low losses'.[25]

Reading through military files from this period, it was certainly the case that a great deal more energy was expended on attending to the poor health of soldiers in the colony than to fighting Algerians. Quite understandably, the lamentable sanitary conditions of much of the country induced a much more widespread sense of fear among soldiers than did the terrifying foes whose barbarity was supposedly never far from their minds.[26] To take just a few examples, in the three months from July to October 1831, 7274 French soldiers were admitted to hospital, with only 4876 being discharged and 694 dying.[27] In total 13,487 men died in Algerian hospitals between 1830 and 1836, an annual figure at least twice that of Headrick's estimate of those killed in combat.[28] Such an equation was tacitly recognised in a military note from 7 January 1838, which acknowledged that more than 20,000 men had died 'either in combat with Arabs or from sicknesses' in the period from 1830.[29] If we extrapolate from the 1830–36 data, this would suggest that around 15,700 men had died due to ill health in the period 1830–37, with around 4000 dying in combat, suggesting that perhaps only 500 or

so men had died annually in battle, and that one was four times more likely to die of disease than on the battlefield. Similar mortality rates prevailed well into the 1840s with, for instance, 5588 deaths recorded across Algeria in 1842.[30] In the Province of Algiers, 2 men were killed by the enemy in April of that year, with 205 perishing in hospitals, while in May the ratio was 6:163.[31]

Unsurprisingly, when such data reached the French press it induced quite considerable public alarm in the metropole, which was compounded by the detailing of the even greater horrors of the most pestilential outposts of the empire.[32] Chief among these was Bône, whose story made quite plain the manner in which disease was the chief enemy against which the army fought in Algeria.

Accounts of life in Bône revealed the terrifying combination of waves of epidemic disease, which European medicine was unequipped to address at this moment, and the terrible cost in lives this imposed as the army insisted on maintaining a considerable garrison in the town. In November 1832 it was reported that morale in the fort was 'perfect', in spite of the fact that there were 1800 sick in the town, 'which amounted to almost all of its inhabitants'.[33] D'Uzer contended that Bône needed to be either evacuated or sanitised, but he admitted to being devastated by the sanitary conditions of the place and the abandonment of measures of cleaning and hygiene: 'it was no longer acceptable to say that funds were not available, [for it was necessary] to save five to six thousand Frenchmen from yellow fever, typhus and a sickness God only knows which will take you in a day or two'.[34] This request was heeded, with 200 workers from the Maltese population recruited to clean the town at a cost of 4000 francs. The situation, however, worsened between 1 November and 27 December, when 290 died, while there remained no surgeon, hospital or barracks in the town.

While a hospital was erected in Bône the following year, it placed great pressure on resources since beds, mattresses and sheets needed to be replaced due to the constant occupancy and the number of deaths (300 between the middle of June and the start of August).[35] Morale was unsurprisingly low among soldiers in the town, not least since while they suffered some areas of the town – the Moorish and European quarters – seemed unaffected by disease. This situation was attributed to the poor living conditions of soldiers in a town where there were only 3500 beds for a garrison of 5200 men. Many lived in cramped conditions in the dirtier parts of town 'in miserable lodgings where the water was not safe, the sewers were infected and unsanitary'. The sense of isolation was made starker by the fact that while steamships brought mail

from France each week, Bône could go without news of France for over a month. The situation was aggravated in 1834, by which point the population had diminished to 3200, of whom almost half were either sick or convalescing, with a death rate of a man a day.[36] To add to the town's woes, an army gunpowder store exploded in January 1837, killing 80 and injuring 200.[37]

In October 1837, an epidemic of cholera broke out among the 12th Regiment with such speed that it was adjudged that no form of rigorous form of quarantine could be imposed.[38] Bône and its hinterland were again worst hit, with 138 dead in the town's hospitals in the first half of the month and ten to fourteen men a day dying in the nearby settlement of Medjez-Amar. Many of the soldiers stationed in Bône still lived in tents, while there were a thousand deaths in total in October and November of that year.[39]

An important and developing thread of meaning was being stitched together from such accounts which emphasised the great dangers the army faced in Africa and the considerable sacrifices they endured in securing the colony for France. The horrors they encountered could not be imagined by the inhabitants of the metropole and it mattered little that their war dead tended to be the victims of epidemic disease and pestilential levels of public health; such killers were as invisible and as deadly as the barbarous Indigènes whom the soldiers faced. A process of conquest and colonisation therefore needed to be predicated upon a project of national sanitation, for only then could the land be made safe for Europeans, and it is perhaps unsurprising that such projects of cleansing tended to move easily between descriptions of the vectors of sickness and the inhabitants of such places. The dream of the *tabula rasa* was very much an environmental fantasy which envisaged a place of safety, just as it was also suggestive of Algeria without Algerians.

Abd el-Kader

In order to fight a war it seems self-evident that one must be faced with an enemy. Quite who this opponent was in the Algerian colony was often rather difficult to discern – if indeed it could be said that France had enemies in the region – for at times it seemed as though the army was chiefly fighting the environment which surrounded them (or struggling with other French actors). In such circumstances it is perhaps not surprising that over time one Algerian figure became invested with the status of an antagonist *primus inter pares*, whose name might be used to rally the troops, to gather support for the war effort in the metropole

and to stand as the centrepiece of narratives of the conflict in the French press. The apparent threat posed by such a singular adversary served as the spine of the stories which soldiers told themselves and others about their work in Africa, making sense of an otherwise alien environment and fitting into French narrative expectations that they would be faced with a despotic Oriental foe.

Simply because such a figure existed as a political and narrative construct does not mean that the historian ought to accept that the dangers posed by such a foe amounted to the hazards that were claimed at the time. Indeed, it makes more sense to try to disentangle the myths built up around such a character so as to ascertain precisely the admixture of genuine and rhetorical threats they posed, and from whence such things came. In the case of Abd el-Kader such rhetoric is of especial importance because of the role he himself played in aggrandising his own status in the Maghreb through his understanding of French expectations of the rivalry they expected to encounter in Algeria.

The centrality of the figure of Abd el-Kader to the story of the early colony is apparent right across historical work on Algeria, not least since the genres of colonial and military history were as dependent on such a form of personalised struggle as were the military memoirs, letters and other sources from the 1830s and '40s on which they were based. Thus, Charles-André Julien entitled a chapter 'Bugeaud et Abd el-Kader', while Benjamin Stora contended that Abd el-Kader 'engaged in continuous harassment, employing his troops in swift attacks and making life impossible for the adversary'.[40] The visibility of this construction of history was quite apparent in Charles-Robert Ageron's approving citation of General Duvivier's remark that 'Abd el Kader was Emir because liberty herself had conferred upon him her sword. He is a historical figure and History will ceaselessly evoke his name as he is never forgotten'.[41] For Ageron, therefore, Abd el-Kader was 'the personality whom Algerians could look to as their national hero'.[42] Frémeaux notes that this valorisation and historicisation was quite apparent in the views of many French officers, who in seeing Abd el-Kader as a 'great foe' accorded him 'real respect; even admiration at times'.[43] Bugeaud himself spoke of Abd el-Kader's 'genius', while his 'ultimate defeat did nothing but elevate his status still further', not least since this apparently intractable foe would later be awarded the grande-croix de la Légion d'honneur by France for his defence of Christians in Syria, as well as a French pension, and who would fail to support the great rebellion of 1871.[44] Curiously, therefore, Abd el-Kader eventually came to play a heroic role not only in post-independence Algerian history-writing – such as Abdelkader Boutaleb's

telling-titled *The Emir Abd el-Kader and the Creation of the Algerian Nation: From the Emir Abd el-Kader to the War of Liberation* – but this epic status only increased in the French imaginary through the nineteenth century.

Intriguingly, however, doubts as to the importance and threat posed by Abd el-Kader were voiced in the early colony, primarily by those who alleged that his narrative construction was a form of political ruse designed to promote the retention of Algeria and, more particularly, its domination by the armée d'Afrique. In April 1842, for instance, Bugeaud angrily denounced 'the Mediterranean newspapers which allege that Abd el-Kader has no more than an ephemeral [underlined in original] power. Oh really?! So Abdelkader is utterly defeated in the province of Oran whilst the khalifas of the east are primed to capitulate, are they?'[45] Soon after Soult was forced to acknowledge such press criticism, noting that it included even those papers supportive of the government, with its suggestion that 'we ought to return to the "restrained occupation", for we are chasing after a chimera, whilst our purported successes are no more than illusions.'[46] In their words, both Soult and Bugeaud therefore revealed the great strategic import of the characterisation of the threat supposedly posed by Abd el-Kader, for if that danger truly was chimeric or ephemeral the grounds for anything greater a 'restrained occupation' were seen to dissolve.

Bugeaud's correspondence from this period, however, revealed a quite different private stance in which his righteous public anger that the dangers posed by Abd el-Kader should never be underestimated was replaced by a pragmatic, realist tone in his dealings with the Emir. 'Hadj Abd el Kader', Bugeaud wrote to him in January 1843, according him his honorific title, 'I read with interest the second letter which you sent via your servant Ben Durand, whom I authorized to travel through the country so as to settle accounts, though not to speak of making peace, since my government prohibits me from dealing with you and having any form of contact other than war.'[47] This was of course the very same government to whom Bugeaud railed against any diminution of the idea of the threat posed by Abd el-Kader, for his capacity to rule Algeria as the head of a militarised colonial state was dependent on metropolitan centres of power being convinced of Algeria being imperilled by the Emir. This sense was helped, perhaps just as cynically and self-consciously, by Abd el-Kader, who in turn wrote 'Au grand des armées françaises, au capitaine des soldats de Tissu, dans le Royaume d'Alger, le Général Bugeaud' precisely that which Bugeaud wished to communicate to his superiors, for in asserting that 'In making war against France, we have the sole intention of following our laws and our religious duties', the Emir played

the role of the native chieftain ineluctably driven to oppose the infidel invaders.[48]

Early French colonial military files certainly made it quite plain that Abd el-Kader was not regarded as a serious threat to the Conquest. He was one of many powerful local tribal leaders with whom the French engaged, but there was no sense of his apparent embodiment of Algerian resistance as would later be the case. He appears to have first been noticed in the winter of 1832, when it was noted that he had sent a deputation to the emperor of Morocco so as to try to obtain a letter endorsing his claim to be called 'the sultan of the Arabs', which he was to receive in January 1833.[49] In spite of such attempts to gather support so as to resist French rule, as well as his invocation of the idea of 'holy war', both Soult and Boyer were reported to have believed that Abd el-Kader did not represent a 'serious danger'. Such a view was based on pragmatic readings of the situation in the colony, not least since it might not be to France's disadvantage if the consolidation of tribal power under a small number of leaders such as Abd el-Kader meant she had a smaller number of foes with whom she needed to pact. French generals understood that while Abd el-Kader may have draped himself in the garb of *jihad*, the reality was that he was primarily interested in attacking other tribes so as to forge a power base for himself, evidently understanding that the development of a cult of personality might be one means to effecting such a goal.

Rather than being seen as an enemy at this moment, Abd el-Kader was primarily viewed by the French as a form of opportunity. While it was true that he was not exactly conceived of as an ally, or a figure whom one might trust, the French military hierarchy were alive to the political gains which might come to the occupation if they could neutralise or manipulate one of the leading tribal figures in the land. The generals well understood the need to play such a strategic game, for the quality and number of their troops were clearly insufficient to either extend or hold their gains without pacting with local powers.

It was thus that in 1834 that Desmichels came to an arrangement with Abd el-Kader, which included the supply of weapons to the Emir, though not the ceding of Mostaganem as the Sheikh had demanded.[50] This agreement was reached in spite of Soult 'doubting the sincerity' of their interlocutor, while Voirol was 'almost certain that he was playing a double game'. Such duplicity was hardly, though, the sole preserve of Abd el-Kader for the French understood their own loyalties to be lightly held and often dependent on slight changes in local circumstances or the personalities of different military leaders. Just a month after pacting

with Abd el-Kader, for instance, Desmichels welcomed the Douair and the Sméla, who had again defeated the Emir in battle.

A political game was therefore being played by the French as much as by Abd el-Kader. Pragmatic goals and longer-term strategic calculations needed to coalesce with ideological positions – which might be conveniently hidden from view, just as they might be placed centre-stage for propagandistic purposes when the time seemed right. In June 1834, the army noted that Abd el-Kader had been forced to defend his sale of horses to 'the Christians'.[51] Such actions convinced Voirol that Abd el-Kader had 'both the ability and the willingness to bring to submission the majority of the Regency', though it was 'politically advisable not to over-favour the ambitions of the emir and instead to foment rivalries which would oblige him to recognize us as his protectors and not view us as his equals'.[52]

Desmichel's faith in his client was certainly apparent in his correspondence from the period. On 2 September he discussed the despatch of gunpowder to Abd el-Kader, who was 'defending our cause' in 'pacifying the east of the province'.[53] In defeating rebellious tribes close to the Moroccan border later in the month, Abd el-Kader had, according to Desmichels, 'offered new proof of the value of his alliance with us', though the contested quality of this claim is quite apparent in an anonymous marginal note to a report of 1 October which observed that Abd el-Kader had captured Sidi Laribi. 'It is inconceivable', the writer of the note declared, 'that general Desmichels cannot sense the danger which might ensue from allowing Abd el-Kader to eliminate his chief rivals one-by-one.'

Pacting with and supplying Abd el-Kader must have seemed a compelling idea to some in the French army, for it seemed to imply and impose a certain order on territory which was not yet fully controlled by France, but the drawbacks of such an approach were that the order of which France's ally was notionally emblematic was profoundly elusive and questionable. Abd el-Kader, to take one example, 'invited the inhabitants of Médéa and Miliana to publicly rejoice at his victory over the French' in July 1835, while later that month the French were unsure as to whether the Emir was en route to Mascara so as to block the supply route to Oran or whether he was in fact travelling to Algiers to mount an attack on the capital.[54]

The confusions of the Algerian policy environment were made plain in Bugeaud's first attempts to resolve the question of Abd el-Kader in 1837, before he became the dominant figure in the army and colonial politics. In the depths of winter, Abd el-Kader's status as a potentially

unifying tribal figure led to a series of chiefs approaching him so as to try to secure a new peace with the French because 'so many were dying of hunger and could no longer pay their contributions'.[55] Rapatel, however, reminded Brossard that French policy at that moment was that no negotiations or dealings could be initiated with the Emir.[56]

The following month, however, Bugeaud, who was a pragmatic figure at this early moment of his career in Africa, sought and gained authorisations to open peace talks with Abd el-Kader, criticising Brossard's strategy in this regard and his general policies of pacification.[57] Yet when Bugeaud put his detailed proposals to the minister he received the rather ambiguous response that the government would 'neither approve nor disapprove' of such a strategy, reminding Bugeaud that it would be necessary for the Arabs to understand that 'peace would be the goal of the vigorous war which would be enjoined against them if they persisted in following the ill-chosen path on which they were presently travelling'.[58] When the order finally came authorising Bugeaud to pact with Abd el-Kader, it explicitly stated that this was 'not to be done in the name of the king'.[59] Bugeaud also understood that this complex situation was made more difficult by the fact that Abd el-Kader was alive to the nuances of divisions between the branches of French power, 'attempting to sow misinformation amongst the French generals'.[60] 'Peace', Bugeaud declared, 'could not be effected without combat', a stance which, he acknowledged, drew on 'Abd el-Kader's ideas'.[61]

While the French saw the advantage which accrued to them through Abd el-Kader and their treaties with him, they also actively sought to contain his power through their pacting with and management of other tribal groupings in the country. In particular, they understood that in drawing Abd el-Kader into highly visible public negotiations, he would necessarily find his credibility questioned among the more atavistic tribes. 'The Arabs', one French note from February read, 'are deeply unhappy with the behaviour of the Emir on their behalf, and they wish to fight a war of revenge against him.'[62] While the Emir's envoy Miloud ben Arach visited Paris in 1838, French generals in Algiers were in some sense working against the thrust of the policy which was emerging in negotiations between their notional political masters and Abd el-Kader's representatives, for they were simultaneously engaged in discussions with Ben Aissa, a tribal rival, with regard to the leadership of Arab rule in Constantine, which they believed 'provided the opportunity of furnishing a powerful enemy in opposition to Abd el-Kader'.[63]

By contrast, the year 1839 saw a general deterioration of relations between the French and Abd el-Kader. The French attributed this discord

to Abd el-Kader's willingness to break treaty arrangements, but we might also observe that on a deeper, structural level, French forces were beginning to become more comfortable in the colony and more able to believe that they could truly conquer and occupy the great extent of the territory of Algeria, which might be another way of saying that they increasingly saw little use for Abd el-Kader in their pacification of the country. They too were instinctively willing to see the Treaty of Tafna as a short-term arrangement which would quickly be superseded. In February, for instance, Valée submitted his proposed objectives for the coming months, which included the occupation of Cherchell, Médéa and Miliana, missions to the Chélif valley and 'the destruction of the principal bases of the Emir'.[64]

Valée observed that 'whilst Abd el-Kader appeared to be holding to the peace', 'the details of his actions suggested that he was uninterested in maintaining and consolidating it'.[65] This particular note was, however, included in a letter which also included instructions for Guéhéneuc, the commanding officer in Oran, to 'secretly put in place all possible obstacles to the emir's obtaining weapons and munitions, whilst offering the protection of the French army to all those who were tired of the vexatious character of Abd el-Kader's rule'. In other words, while France should give the appearance of respecting its treaty arrangements, it should be carefully working towards a situation where it abandoned its Arab ally, while also attempting to diminish his strength through secretly pacting with tribes who might be persuaded away from the Emir's tent.

While it was in France's interests to be able to make peace with figures such as Abd el-Kader who could guarantee the loyalty of the whole series of tribes across the region, it was equally in the interest of the occupying power to foment divisions between powerful local groupings so as to enhance the possibility of dividing and ruling fragmented indigenous authorities. The French therefore paid special attention to Arab and Berber resistance to Abd el-Kader, keen to see what advantage might accrue to them from such divisions. In March and April, for instance, reports from Mascara indicated that Abd el-Kader had gathered the chiefs of the region in order to levy 'such outrageously inflated taxes that none had been willing to pay such sums'.[66] In fact, the 'population of Cherchell had refused to pay and had revolted when the emir had threatened to destroy their town', which in turn had inspired Tedjini of the Ain Mahdi to challenge Abd el-Kader's right to represent the tribes of the desert. As tended to happen at such moments when the fragile set of alliances which constituted Abd el-Kader's seeming power began

to crack, 'a tribe who had hitherto been loyal to the emir made peace with France'.

The true weakness of Abd el-Kader's own power-base was confirmed soon thereafter in a report from Daumas that 'in spite of the fact that he had preached holy war, the Kabyles had been disgusted by Abd el-Kader's ambition and his rapacity', while the tax he had demanded had only been paid to whose territories the Emir had easy access and refused by the others. Abd el-Kader had been adjudged to have preached *jihad* in an impolitic fashion, such that the Arabs were now heard to say 'since we are going to be brought to war, why should we to give you our money?'[67]

Abd el-Kader continued to deploy the threat of holy war in his communications with the French – writing to Valée on 18 November that 'you should be ready for all the Muslims to unleash a holy war' – yet Soult saw such intimidation as a sign of the Emir's 'powerlessness', believing that he had no true desire to restart a war with the French.[68] This understanding of 'holy war' as a mere rhetorical device seems much more realistic than the taking seriously of such claims which prevailed among some commanders in the colony. The underlying weakness of Abd el-Kader's position at this point was made plain by the time he was forced to devote to combating Arab foes, imprisoning 27 chiefs, for instance, who were prepared to switch their allegiance to the colonial power, and fretting that enemies such as the Sheikh of the Ain Mahdi were preparing attacks which would leave him exposed on separate fronts to his French and Arab foes.[69]

From the start of 1840, the pretence of peace with Abd el-Kader was abandoned, with Valée initiating a series of engagements which included a routing of the Emir's army between Blida and Chiffa. On a separate front, Abd el-Kader's troops suffered a series of major defeats at Arzew, Mostaganem and Mazagran, chiefly at the hands of Mustapha ben Ismaël, enduring losses of between 500 and 600 men at the last of these places, faced with a very considerable force of 12,000 men.[70] Abd el-Kader was then forced to completely evacuate the Mitidja and to flee in the direction of Miliana.[71] From this position of considerable weakness, Abd el-Kader attempted to make peace with Ahmed Bey, while Valée posed the question as to whether the French should 'push Abd el-Kader to sign a new treaty or whether it would be better to destroy the Emir'.[72] This of course revealed the underlying truth of the situation, for the French were evidently in a position at any point in time to decide whether to eliminate Abd el-Kader as a power or to allow some continuance of his dominion. This rather gives the lie to those French

claims which emerged, suggesting that there was a fear that Abd el-Kader genuinely imperilled the existence of the colony.

In time Bugeaud would certainly have much less willingness than previous governor generals to countenance the idea that Abd el-Kader was a major power in the land. While the Emir attempted to reconstitute some of his authority through the forging of new alliances – such as those he effected with the Trara and the Moroccan tribe the Beni Snassen in April 1841[73] – word reached the tribes that 'the most severe punishments' would be inflicted upon those who 'received the Emir without engaging him in combat'.[74] By this point, the French estimated that Abd el-Kader was left with no more than 300 men who were 'in a state of great misery, though they dared not desert for they did not know where they might go'.[75] Later in the year, d'Arbouville reported that while the size of his forces had slightly increased, 'the Emir had become timid, barely daring to move without his men other than to attempt occasional razzias'.[76] Another French correspondent noted that 'one no longer hears talk of the Emir since he retreated from these lands'.[77]

As Bugeaud wrote of the Emir, 'his reputation declines on a daily basis amongst the populations [...] in spite of the pity that these unfortunate people inspire in me, I shall pursue them in their redoubts [...] for it is only through the demonstration that I am more relentless than Abd el-Kader that I will be able to cut their Gordian Knot'.[78] In finding this particular formulation Bugeaud was once again pointing to that gap which existed between the apparent power of the Emir, along with the fealty of his peoples, and the reality of the chimeric or Gordian power which he truly held in the land. The following summer, in June 1842, Bugeaud tellingly wrote to Soult that 'all is well right across the land. The rule of Abd el Kader has been shaken, for this chief, formerly at the head of a nation' 'is today accompanied by just a few horsemen [...] The war is over' ('La guerre serieuse est donc fini').[79]

Externalities

In grasping how the army understood Algeria in the 1830s, it is important to appreciate the spatial dimensions of the invasion. The three chief spatial narratives which are told about the early colony are, one, that a battle for land was fought between the European army and her local foes; two, that there was a risk that the Army in Africa would establish its own independent power base hundreds of miles from the metropole; and, consequently, three, that there existed considerable tensions and misunderstandings between those charged with conquest and

governance in the metropole and the colony. These readings of Algeria were quite real, but what has perhaps been progressively overlooked is the extent to which the army's actions in North Africa were also determined by their awareness of the situation of Algeria in the Maghreb, its place in the Arab-Islamic world, as a neighbour of Morocco and as a piece in the geopolitics of the Mediterranean more generally. That such factors have gradually been forgotten over time is unsurprising, for hindsight would reveal that many of the fears of soldiers in the 1830s were unfounded and would matter little in terms of the entrenchment of France's colonial presence, but this did not mean that such things were unimportant in the febrile, often baffling world of the first decades of the occupation.

Chief among these perceived threats were the English, who it was believed were committed to meddling in the affairs of the colony so as to destabilise French rule and the more general well-being of the French presence in the world. This worry was particularly pronounced in the early life of the colony, when memories and fears of war with the British were at their strongest, for there was a conviction that 'it would be impossible to defend Algeria in case of a war between France and England'.[80]

The fact that the concentration of French power in North Africa would be diluted in the case of any war in Europe was well understood by Abd el-Kader and other regional forces in Algeria, which in turn induced a certain fear in the French, who worried that the stability of their rule depended not only on the broader realities of statecraft in Europe and Africa but also on Algerian readings of such situations. In September 1840 it was reported that 'Abd el-Kader was vigorously preparing for a conflict, successfully recruiting many to his cause with talk of the probability of a war in Europe', which provoked 'a sense of agitation amongst the Kabyles'.[81] Later that autumn, 'the political scene in Europe interacted with the military situation in Algeria and with its occupation'.[82] Such spatial anxieties were therefore founded on complex chains of understanding, for by 1840 it was less the fear of war itself in Europe which concerned the military rulers than the manner in which Algerians might exploit this knowledge, for they themselves understood that French power in the colony was dynamically connected to geopolitics more generally. This sense of Algerian interest in and intimate knowledge of European affairs was evidently at a variance with prevailing descriptions of Indigènes, which stressed their isolation and abandonment from worlds of learning. Instead it was reflective of a more grudging and constant acceptance of Algerian forms of resistance

depending on knowledge and understanding of power which emerged especially at these moments of weakness (the same would be true in 1868–71 when the Franco-Prussian War would occasion the last great revolt against French rule).

This fear of the coincidence of tribal and British interests re-emerged in the early 1840s, when French fears of the effect of a European war on the colony were at their height. According to information supplied to Bugeaud in April 1841, the English were engaged in selling arms to Abd el-Kader, while the *Armoricain* reported that the Emir was benefiting from the creation of a recruitment bureau in Gibraltar which was directed by an English officer.[83] This relationship continued through 1842, with the French accusing the British of directing the activities of their intermediary, a colonel Scott, though the degree to which Scott truly represented the interests of the British crown seems rather murky. In September of that year Scott was arrested, having been accused, by the English consul general in Algiers, of being a 'trumped-up colonel', a 'madman' and an adventurer who could no longer be recognised as an English subject.[84]

Such threats to the existence to the colony from European and western powers were, though, of a second order as compared with the hazards posed by Algeria's more immediate neighbours in North Africa and in the Arab and Islamic world more generally (including the medical threat of plagues from Egypt, Syria and returning pilgrims from Mecca and Medina[85]). The French sense of exposure in Algeria came both from her being the first European power to establish a stronghold in the region (excepting the failed seventeenth-century English colony of Tangiers) and from a curious mixture of knowledge and a comprehension of her lack of understanding of the Maghreb. The process of colonisation would have been made much simpler had Algeria really been a nation in the European understanding of the word, but on the ground there was an appreciation that she was no such thing and that the Army in Africa was engaged in a thoroughly novel project of nation-building. Instead, 'Algeria' was a collection of fluid kingdoms, territories and tribal lands whose governance was in a process of almost constant shifting, both in and beyond the notional borders which the generals drew up for their new state.

Atop or asunder such social and political demarcations lay the broader question of there being an Islamic polity, though French soldiers might sometimes have been understandably uncertain as to whether such a community trumped more immediate rivalries between tribes, chiefs and races. The importance of the rhetorical invocation

of 'holy war' by men such as Abd el-Kader melded with the threat which alliances between regional powers posed to emergent French rule in Algeria, alongside the longer historical context of Mediterranean conflict between Christians and Muslims.

Nevertheless a considerable cast of potential allies for Algerians were mentioned in despatches in the first decades of the colony, including the pacha of Egypt (who was appealed to by Ahmed Bey in 1834),[86] the Turkish government (who were understandably believed to have maintained contact with France's enemies, in 1837[87]) and the Bey of Tunis (especially from 1839 onwards, when relations between the Bey and Abd el-Kader began to concern the French).[88] France's relations with Tunis were especially important because of the border which began to be established between France's territory in North Africa and that of the Bey, which was initially rather a fluid line of demarcation simply because the shape and limits of the Algerian colony were a work-in-progress. This engendered a number of skirmishes between Tunisian tribes and the French army, until the summer of 1843, when General Randon was tasked with working with Tunisian officials to map an agreed border between the two kingdoms.[89] The politics of life in Tunisia was also seen as a matter of concern in Algiers, as was the case in November 1843 when the failure of the Tunisian cereal harvests, to the consternation of the French, was being exploited by the Sardinian government and by speculators, which the French believed would induce a more general hatred of Christians across the region.[90]

Unsurprisingly, especially in the early years of the colony, similar issues regarding the demarcation of borders occurred with the more powerful Moroccan empire. In January 1832, Boursali wrote to Boyer to inform him of the gravity of the situation in Tlemcen, where 'we are confined to our quarters and leave only when well-armed fearing for our security [. . .] the Arabs are treacherous people in whom we will never place confidence'.[91] More significantly, on a strategic level, the towns of Blida, Médéa and Miliana, as well as Tlemcen, had sent emissaries to the emperor of Morocco, with the French admitting to themselves that the territorial claims of Algeria's neighbour were strong ones and therefore needed to be vehemently opposed. All the while, agents of the emperor, such as Mohammed Bel Hamri, were agitating in towns such as Mascara and directing troops to recapture such towns.[92]

While Moroccan claims to Algerian lands publicly waned as a coherent Algerian state began to be created and secured, French fears shifted to the role Morocco played as the supposed controller and quartermaster-in-chief of Abd el-Kader. In 1834 it was reported that

according to Fitzjames, Abd el-Kader was pushed and helped by Morocco, which was responsible for much of the trouble in Oran, that the Emir had received an order from the Emperor to hold onto any French prisoners he seized and that the Moroccan emperor was attempting to reignite a crusade against the Christians.[93] In June 1838, it was noted that the support the emperor provided Abd el-Kader was a secret to no one, with arms, gunpowder, sulphur, copper and cloth arriving every day.[94] At times such supply routes were the product of compact between three of France's foes – Abd el-Kader, the Moroccans and the English – with weapons being moved through Gibraltar, while it was well understood that in Morocco the local population had great sympathy for Abd el-Kader.[95] In time, the Moroccans would attempt to formalise this troubling nexus of France's enemies, for in March 1842 it was reported that 'the Emperor had demand that the British government mediate between France and Abd el-Kader', with the Moroccans travelling to London to press their claims to Tlemcen, benefitting from British backing, if not material support, which was anyhow supplied to the Emir.[96]

An underlying French concern regarding Morocco was the idea that the threat it posed originated not in the Machiavellian politics of an emperor who could quite rationally be understood to be protecting the territorial integrity of his own kingdom, and who might legitimately be fearful as to French designs on his lands, but that Moroccan hostility was driven by the intolerant zeal of the emperor's subjects. Thus, in May 1842, it was reported that 'the state of our relations with Morocco grows worse by the day, with the timid emperor overwhelmed by his own representatives and the fanaticism of the population'.[97] With the emissaries of Abd el-Kader travelling through the east and the south fomenting holy war, 'it was not the emperor who it had become necessary to convince and intimidate, but the bigoted and fractious population of Fes'.[98]

Yet alongside such fears, the French in Algeria were able to recognise that the situation in Morocco was more nuanced and complex than it might at first have appeared. While it was true that the population of Fes believed that the emperor was too well-disposed towards Christians, the 'Moors of Tangiers were in general quite well disposed towards us'.[99] It was understood that within political elites, the 'warmth of support for the Defender of Islam' (Abd el-Kader) was a source of some dissent among leading factions at the court.[100] As early as 1840 it was reported that the Emperor himself saw Abd el-Kader as something of a threat to his own reign for while:

> The population of Morocco is generally hostile to France and her sympathies lie with Abd el-Kader, the Emperor of Morocco knows that his subjects are unhappy with his administration and he fears them, for if a vanquished Abd el-Kader seeks sanctuary in Morocco, the plentiful discontented and fanatic factions might attach themselves to the Emir and attempt to place a new dynasty on the throne.[101]

Nor was it the case that the British sought to constantly foment trouble in the region, as seen in May 1842 when the governor of Gibraltar was ordered to ensure that no arms of weapons were sent to either Morocco or Abd el-Kader.[102]

The last throes of Abd el-Kader's activity undoubtedly depended upon his exploitation of the long and porous border which had been settled between Algeria and Morocco, with the Emir raiding in the former and retreating to the latter. Such movement was invariably interpreted by the French as indicating an enmity between states, but leaving aside the question as to whether Moroccan support for Abd el-Kader was of any military significance by the mid-1840s, there is plenty of evidence that the Emperor and his court tried to quash support for their co-religionist. By 1843 or 1844 it had become apparent to the Moroccans that it was plausible that the French might use the pretext of their support for Abd el-Kader as a means of invading the country, and potentially beginning the process of dismantling existing structures of power as a prelude to imperial conquest. Thus the contours of the First Franco-Moroccan War of 1844–47 were shaped, which concluded with Moroccan abandonment of support for the Emir, his capture by France and the articulation of a clear definition of relative power in the Maghreb.

At almost no point in this process, however, had Emperor Abd al Rahman had anything to gain from supporting Abd-el Kader other than the fealty of his more *jihadi* subjects, who in practice were able to offer support to the Emir whether it was sanctioned or not. Such a recognition was made plain in French reports such as that of La Moricière in August 1843, which noted that it had become notorious within the smala of the Emir that the Moroccan Emperor provided no support for his cause on the grounds that he had no wish to compromise his relations with the French.[103] A similar note from September 1843 remarked that the emperor saw the cause of Abd el-Kader as desperate and had refused him exile.[104] One year previously, the French consul had admitted that Abd el-Kader was the common enemy of both monarchies, 'for it is he who sustains and foments discord between two nations who have been allies for centuries'.[105]

While it was true that other French intelligence suggested that such support had not been quelled – as was the case in September 1843 – the French did seem to recognise that Abd el-Kader had become as much a problem to the Moroccans as he had formerly been a useful political tool with which to prick a new and overbearing neighbour.[106] This equation was now effectively reversed, for Bedeau, Bugeaud and others recognised that the Emperor was in a difficult position where his absolute renunciation for the Emir generated internal dissent, while any outward support for him would lead to a French invasion, which in itself might provide an opportunity for Moroccan supporters of Abd el-Kader who would have preferred to install their leader as a more legitimately Islamist monarch if a foreign invader happened to sufficiently destabilise the foundations of the ruling dynasty's power.

Military colonialism and autarky

Algeria was a confusing place in the 1830s. There existed a profound uncertainty as to the purpose of the colony and whether it should be retained by France. If it was to be kept, how should it be governed and what kind of future might be envisaged for the French in Africa? Such questions lay at the heart of public debate and a series of special commissions which investigated the 'Algerian Question' over the course of the period, such as the commission of 1833 which had as its remit 'the examination as to whether French interests were served by preserving her conquest and, if this was the case, the policies and means which she should deploy'.[107]

The army was well aware of the destabilising character of these debates, but it was not simply the case that such discussions took place in Paris, for a succession of Governor Generals and leading commanders played key roles in trying to answer and define the Algerian Question. Over time it became clear that a conviction grew up among an embittered and embattled army that its work in the colony was under-appreciated by the French political classes, press and public.

Military fears that 'their' gains might be lost by metropolitan interests were apparent as early as 1835 when General Damrémont announced himself to be 'extremely worried about the future of our African possessions, for a group is forming in the Chamber which is calling for their abandonment. What shame for France!'[108] That month, General d'Uzer also noted that he believed that 'in Paris they show scarce interest in the progress of the colonisation, while it is said that the Chamber of Deputies has become hostile to the enterprise and is demanding our evacuation'. This scepticism as to the value of the colony was made quite

plain in the budget commission for 1836 which 'attacked the occupation and the colonisation of the country, refusing to allocate the funds for the extra 6000 men demanded by the marshal'. This, according to a military correspondent, 'caused the colonists and trading interests to tremble', for in spite of the great cost – in lives and francs – of the invasion and occupation up until that point, it demonstrated that there was not a decisive willingness to maintain a French presence in North Africa.

The bitterness this situation induced in the military high command was quite apparent in d'Uzer's 1835 note that the government 'no longer knew what it wanted. There is even talk of abandonment [...] which would betray a whole population and deliver them onto the swords of their enemies [...] our world is now one of back-stabbing and intrigue.'[109] More than 120 years later, during the course of the Algerian War of Independence, it would become apparent that profoundly different understandings of the value of the colony had emerged between, on the one hand, the French army in Africa and, on the other, much of the French public and the metropolitan political class. This division had its origins in the very earliest days of the colony, when many soldiers quickly concluded that they were the only group who might be trusted with the future of Algeria. This is not to say that there were not major policy disagreements among the generals, but there was a universal conviction that the future of Algeria could and should be secured by the military. The army felt increasingly under siege in the colony, somewhat uncomprehending as to why the value of its efforts was under-appreciated as it sought to regain glory for the nation following the humiliations of France's last major foreign policy engagements in the late Napoleonic period.

Such debates continued through the 1830s and '40s, with the army noting that figures such as Renaud de Bécourse 'spent every day bemoaning the ruinous and deadly Algerian colony', while (in 1840) Soult, the minister of war approved of General Valée's intention to 'engage with the liberal political grouping [...] to encourage them to support France's remaining in Africa'.[110] As we will see, Soult, who served as Minister of War or Prime Minister across most of the period 1830–45, following a distinguished Napoleonic military career, became the key figure in the maintenance of the colony, able to negotiate both with his political peers in Paris and with the military class, from whom he had emerged, in Algiers. Until Bugeaud's arrival in Algeria in 1836, and his later accession to the position of Governor General, there was remarkably little continuity of French military-political leadership in the

colony – with seven Governor Generals in as many years – which was reflected in the rather confused policy environment in the colony.

While troops were numbered only in the tens of thousands in the 1830s, the army could only aspire to pacify a portion of the Algerian territory, but their grand dreams of a military colony became eminently realisable once the army had grown to a hundred thousand men. As Bugeaud would argue in February 1843, 'it is evident that this grand design for true dominance and a colony can only be achieved by establishing military colonies, though at present the size of the army is insufficient for such a goal'.[111]

This vision for the future of Algeria was of course greatly contested by the many politicians, journalists, pamphleteers, merchants, doctors and polemicists in Paris, Marseilles and Algiers who objected to the overmightiness of the army, but while the voices of such groups may have been loud, the army's equally forceful arguments were backed up with one hundred thousand advocates on the ground.[112] While the project of large-scale exclusive military colonisation may ultimately have failed (as opposed to mixed colonialism overseen by a dominant army), Bugeaud was able to exert practical control over the land through schemes such as that of December 1841 where retiring soldiers were offered smallholdings as pensions.[113] Even when the hubris of Bugeaud's plans was officially disdained – as was the case in September 1842 when Soult expressed his disapproval that Bugeaud had published *Algeria: The Means of Holding Onto and Exploiting the Colony* – the Governor General was granted extraordinary latitude, receiving funding that month for the construction of two military colonies in the Sahel in spite of having been accused of failing to foster colonialism more generally.[114]

This form of territorial and economic dominance played an important part in Bugeaud's thinking and there has been a tendency to underestimate the scale of the concomitant development of a distinct form of militarised capitalism in the 1840s, in which traditional economies were destroyed and replaced by a national market created and controlled by the army. As Bugeaud put it in June 1842, 'the army will be, for some time, the only means of government in this place, the only agent of the grand projects which will contain the country: the opening-up of trade routes into the interior and the acceleration of colonisation'.[115] If such expansive dreams cohered to form a clear vocabulary of militarised capitalist domination, the more prosaic grammar of such work was revealed in the commonplace notes from the period where Bugeaud and other generals authorised the movement and export of cloths, livestock and grains from across the country.[116]

The initial reason as to why economic control became so important to the army was evidently the fact that the extension of its rule from its first coastal bases depended as much on the development of a functioning infrastructure as it did upon pacting with tribes. Since the establishment of such communications was evidently a slow process, and because the army was poorly supplied with provisions and matériel from the metropole, it quickly came to rely on entering local markets to trade or requisition that which it needed to sustain the occupation. The larger the army became, the greater were such problems, so it should not seem surprising that by the 1840s, we find direct correlations between the army's need to feed its men and its determination to utterly control the flow of goods through the country.

The establishment of a coherent infrastructure was conceived of as distinct form of making war against the tribes, complementing the great confiscatory razzia in which millions of animals were seized through the 1840s (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6). Soult, for instance, wrote to Bugeaud in April 1842 of the advantages of the new state of relative peace around Bône, 'You will doubtless understand that the opening of effective roads is the most powerful weapon we have available in our armoury to enforce the submission of those tribes which have been hostile to this point.'[117] Days later Soult would justify moving from the pacification of the Arabs to the Kabyles on the basis that 'it was of the greatest importance to secure direct communications between Gigelli and Bougie with Sétif and Constantine' for the 'commercial interests' thus created 'would prove a powerful means of combating the inhabitants of these mountains'.[118]

One of the chief reasons as to why Soult was so keen to stress such imperatives was the fact that he faced great domestic pressure (from both the Trésor and the Chambers) to contain the costs of the Algerian adventure, which by this point was evidently an almost impossible task given the size of the French contingent in Algeria. In June 1842, for example, he was moved to write to Bugeaud of his 'astonishment' at how much the army consumed, noting that the 'scale of consumption went well beyond all budgetary predictions', leading Soult to wonder whether 'negligence', 'poor supervision' and other 'abuses' were at the root of such inflated consumption.[119] That same summer, however, Soult was forced to acknowledge the effects of such tight budgeting on those who served in Africa, recognising the potent combination of their being nutritionally deprived, tired and exposed to danger.[120] Such privations were worsened by the fact that foods such as boiled beef would become rotten even before they arrived in Algiers,[121] leading Soult to

the conclusion that such preserved rations would increasingly need to be produced in Algeria itself, with a complete supply chain (from the rearing of cows to the distribution of rations) managed by the army.[122]

The army's need to establish economic and infrastructural control over Algeria was therefore propelled not only by its own size, but also the budgetary limits which the metropole imposed on the overmighty occupation. We know that the suffering of soldiers was much more the result of hunger, malnutrition and poor medical care than it was the consequence of the dangers posed by Algerians, yet those who commanded the army had become enmeshed in a series of circular logics in which the presence of a massive standing force was alleged to be necessary to pacify the land, which could only become controlled through an economic domination which would feed the men of the army.

Bugeaud admitted as much in a letter of 1842 in which he wrote approvingly of 'the great increase in commerce across Algeria', which was accompanied by the growing local recognition that rather than making war, 'I am more concerned with establishing my control over the land'.[123] The practical advantages of the establishment of strategic control over markets were plain in a note from to Bugeaud from St Arnaud that summer in which the field commander celebrated having secured quantities of straw, wheat and corn at preferential rates from French allies. The general wrote in a relieved fashion that he now had 'sufficient provisions in place to last my 2400 men for six months. I no longer fear the impact of the winter or its effects upon my horses and cattle'.[124] Such herds were of course themselves acquired through conquest or taxation, with the French keen to stress the purported benevolence of their own seizures as compared with those of powerful tribes upon the weaker.[125]

The great frustration the French felt when they were unable to control, or in some cases understand local markets was evident throughout the 1840s. The project of spatially ordering Algeria depended upon a complete control of flows of people and goods, so those networks which evaded French control were seen as quite striking aggravations. Thus in July 1847, the interim Governor General wrote to the Minister that:

> Across the whole extent of our Government of Algeria, we have always and continue to see the Arabs and the Kabyles armed with good weapons and that they are always well-supplied with gunpowder [...] Yet where are the arms factories and gunpowder workshops which produce such things? Do they mainly come from the Kabyles mountains where our authority has scarcely penetrated, or do they

> enter in the form of contraband, from Europe, Morocco, Tunis, from the sea or from the desert?[126]

Such examples of the incompleteness of French military-economic control were relatively rare by this point, with sets of strict rules established on the transport of all foodstuffs and grains around the country (as well as their being imported) and a national system of price fixing imposed by the office of the Governor General.[127] Such fiscal domination and the complete incorporation of local economies had only been made possible by policies promoting and enforcing the use of French currency earlier in the decade. In May 1842, for example, the Governor General had written to General Bedeau that he had despatched 4800 piastres to Tlemcen and that 'little by little it was important to accustom the Arabs to accept our money', for to do so would be a true form of submission.[128] Bedeau was instructed to pay for transport and other services only using French money and to insist that the local Jews did the same 'under penalty of being chased away', while any Jews who continued to use the Spanish coin were to be made an example of to drive the message home to the Indigènes.

Military files reveal the great efforts which were expended upon collating, quantifying and assessing the flows of goods and people from the smallest local markets to the national level in the 1840s, and the degree to which the French hold on Algeria was to be located in economic control and measurement. Thus in a typical report from the marketplace at Mascara in June 1842, the seduction of Arabs into a militarised economy was intuited from the manner in which 'they came to our markets, willing to spend lots of money, frequenting the Moorish cafes' and buying cottons, Indian fabrics, handkerchiefs and suchlike, 'as well as household supplies such as sugar, coffee, salt and pepper; in general consuming a great deal of the products brought to the market by traders from Oran and Mostaganem'.[129] The markets were 'much visited' and the officers 'remarked that the Arabs came much more than before', with the classic form of colonial capture in which the tribes became dependent on the French as consumers of their raw materials and producers of their manufactures.

An added advantage of the tribes becoming incorporated into the colonial economy was evidently the fact the French gained access not just to more consumers but greater number of suppliers of the services they needed. The success of such supply-side expansion was seen in the price merchants paid to hire pack animals to transport goods from the coastal centres of entrepôt to Mascara, the cost of which had fallen from

120 francs an animal in January 1842, 100 francs in February, between 40 and 80 francs in March, to 25 to 30 francs by June, with the possibility of hiring some transport for just 20 francs. Most tellingly, this collapse in the value of the tribes goods and services was interpreted as benefitting the Arabs, who 'received a great deal of money for the animals which they lent to our traders', with no comment being offered on the gains to the colonial occupier of having secured control of this branch of the local economy. That same summer as Bugeaud outlined his plans for continued military domination of Algeria, he identified falls in the prices of commodities and foodstuffs as being a 'peace dividend', and that such falls and control of markets would prove to be 'a monument on which the future prosperity of Algeria would be based'.[130] 'Africa', Bugeaud announced, 'would pay for itself in just a few years.'

The army and the ministry's determination to gauge, regulate and control movements of goods and people at very local levels were expressive of the notion that overarching and permanent forms of social control would ensue from a project in which knowledge begat governance and the possibility of remaking the structures of reality in Algeria. This sense of rationally ordering space was accompanied by constant anxieties with regard to communications, both by road and ship, for the gradual absorption and incorporation of the tribes could only be effected if they sensed that their worlds were now wholly encircled by a new form of economic power.

The extent to which such forms of power were conceived of distinct forms of warfare and domination was made plain in a further note from June 1842, in which Bugeaud wrote of the manner in which he proposed to submit the difficult territories around Blida. The fragile French grip on the Attlah region was to be expanded through a security operation which would 'bring to the town a little of the commerce which it so needs'.[131] The specific means of achieving this end was to seize control of local grain economies in 'introducing as much grain as possible' into the markets of Miliana and Médea, rewarding soldiers with 14 francs per 100 kg of barley and 20 francs for that of wheat. This domination of the supply of grain was to be accompanied by attempts to utterly destroy locals' productive capacity and to enforce their reliance upon their conquerors. 'While I hold little hope of the immediate submission of the tribes in these areas', Bugeaud wrote, 'I attach great importance to, wherever possible, our ruining their harvests before they are gathered.'[132] General Arbouville was therefore ordered to begin burning crops along both banks of the Chélif, though a portion of the land was to be left

untouched so that the French might harvest enough straw to see them through the following winter.

'I know', Bugeaud continued, 'that the tribes reserves are low and that their silos are generally empty, so they are greatly depending on the success of this year's harvest.' Once they began to see how the French were proceeding, 'it was quite possible that the fear of seeing their crops burnt would effect a resolution'. We see here a perfect example of the forms of environmental or ecological warfare which developed in Algeria, in which French analysis of local economies and their determination to concurrently restrict the tribes productive capacity, while flooding local markets with goods, was seen as a new system of domination appropriate to local conditions. Once captured in this fashion, tribes had no means of escape for their very status as independent actors who might draw on the resources of their lands for survival had disappeared, to be replaced by a form of being in which they lived at the behest of the French army.

4
Violence in Algeria, 1830–37

Inter-Arab Violence

In the early days of the conquest, French soldiers offered a stark picture of the barbarism of conflict between tribes in Algeria. In June 1832, for instance, the Ouled Sidi e-Arabi had seized fourteen rival chiefs, nine of whom were from the Medjeher, and 'cut them into pieces'.[1] Later that year, the Aga of the Bey of Constantine had mounted a surprise attack on rival tribes, in which he had cut off the heads of 22 men as well as 'committing all sorts of horrors on their women and girls'.[2] Months later that very same Aga was 'decapitated', along with fourteen other courtiers, by Ahmed Bey. The tribes around Bône greatly feared that they would be the next of Bey's targets while, d'Uzer, the French commander, reported that his army was unable to offer them protection due to their insufficient numbers.[3]

In some senses, the fact that the land they proposed to 'conquer' was divided among so many rival tribes and was so fragmented as compared with the picture they had perhaps had of the territory of the 'Ottoman Empire' which they believed their imperium to be succeeding seemed to have surprised French commanders in Algeria. Numerous letters from the period described the poor relations which existed among tribes.[4] The prevalence of atrocities, massacres and decapitations, by contrast, seemed quite natural to French writers, for they accorded with the picture of North Africa the Europeans carried with them. While in Europe, the massacre of civilians, Brower noted, was 'hideous, abhorrent. In Africa, it is war itself'.[5]

In French accounts, tribesmen never 'died in combat' or were 'killed', but were either 'decapitated', 'massacred' or 'shorn of their heads'. The scale of such assaults was also regarded as noteworthy by French

correspondents, with '35 heads being cut' when 'two tribes allied to the Bey of Constantine were victims of the vengeance of their rivals',[6] 157 of the Beni Amer were beheaded by the Douair and the Sméla,[7] while Ahmed Bey 'cut off 200 heads' and decapitated a rival whose tribe included a young woman whom he coveted.[8] Abd el-Kader evidently became an emblem of such practices, 'decapitating', for example, the cadi of Cherchell in April 1837 and 'beheading 30 of the tribal chieftains who recognized Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdallah Ouled-Sidi Chigr' – a rival and a potential French ally – in January 1842,[9] while in December 1835 his troops had 'pillaged Mascara and massacred many Jews [...] leaving the town entirely destroyed'.[10]

Such accounts of tribal violence in Algeria played an important role in describing the character of the environment in which the French now found themselves. While decapitations and massacres could have been viewed as being strange and noteworthy, they were quickly accepted as 'natural' forms of political life in the Maghreb, confirming French preconceptions as to the essential barbarism and difference of this theatre of war. Meshed to the broader European claim that empire provided the opportunity to reorient backward societies towards the progressive path to civilisation was the notion that cultures of violence in the Maghreb were symbolic of its retarded culture.

More particularly, there was a sense that such forms of violence constituted a form of language or communication in North Africa, for beheadings and decapitations were evidently designed for the purposes of display – expressive of notions of power to rival tribes, to others in a region and to the massacring tribe's own sense of identity. This ethnographic claim joined a stock of other preconceptions as to how one might read such violence, which also included the observation that attacks in Algeria often aspired to be completist, which is to say that massacres had as their goal the complete elimination of a tribe or its leadership. Embedded in the logic of the raid one might find the dream of the *tabula rasa* in which one's own self could be more amply expressed without the burden of others. As Brower remarks, 'the violence did have a political purpose. It recorded a crude sort of message, inscribing its meaning on the bodies of victims, people who became "debris". These survivors served as a grim symbol, a memento mori announcing the new regime's massive and inscrutable power, which was almost godlike in its intensity.'[11] 'Ultimately', Brower suggests, 'this violence was probably less about impressing people about to be colonized than a way for the French army to impress itself', which seems partly correct, but only partly so, for while such violence was expressive of French fears

and dreams, it certainly imagined that it had the potential to speak a language which was well understood in North Africa.[12]

Legalism

Clear splits were, however, apparent in French views as to how they should respond to such violence and how it might influence their own behaviour. A legalist camp alleged that such 'atrocities' ought to be viewed as war crimes and as precisely the kinds of barbarism which civilisational imperialism should aspire to abolish. France should seek to make examples of such behaviour and through her own actions she might show how modern and civilised warfare ought to be conducted. As might be expected, such ideas gained great traction on the page and in debates between political and military power groupings in Paris and Algiers, for they had considerable rhetorical force, while they were also expressive of beneficent logics that more generally underpinned the Algerian project.

In 1832, for instance, we read that Soult 'approved of the mode adopted by d'Uzer in the judgement of an Arab who had been condemned to death, the minister recalling for the general the rules governing the composition of military tribunals'.[13] The following year Soult charged La Moricière with the task of establishing a 'project of amnesty' for all crimes which the tribes and individual Arabs had committed against the French, which reflected a general sense that Algeria was no longer a territory defined by war, with its norms, but an extension of the French rule of law.[14] The law of amnesty seemed to express the idea that it was understandable that Algerians had violently resisted the French invasion, but that a moment had quickly been reached when both parties needed to accept that their interchange should be governed by a common set of norms. This idea was a remarkable one in at least two ways: firstly, that it seemed remarkably premature in terms of having declared an end to formal hostilities and, secondly, because embedded in this proposal was the idea that when in Algeria the French ought to learn to think through the position of the people whom they had defeated – a politics of alterity which is unique to this moment and almost wholly abandoned thereafter for the duration of French rule in Algeria.

Such initiatives were of course also revealing of an intriguing feature of this form of legalism, which was its tendency to implicitly suggest that Algeria was not a theatre of war but somehow already an extension of the civil jurisdictional realm of French metropolitan law. If this

were the case, Algerian resistance to the French army was not a form of military opposition to an invading power, but criminal or civil disobedience. To borrow an analogy from Islamic jurisprudence, Algeria was no longer a part of the *dar al harb*, 'the world of war', which had its own legal codes, but a French national equivalent of the *dar al Islam*, in which Muslim law demanded a fairer treatment for a defeated and subdued enemy.

The question of the legal status of the colony and the extent to which the peoples of Algeria should enjoy the rule of law in the manner in which it was exercised were critical in the early colony, as they of course had tended to be in almost all European incursions into the extra-European world. Such juridical debates were made especially complex by the fact that it could be argued that the actions of French soldiers should be judged not according to the law but according to the norms and morals of war, which were of course at this point yet to be codified in any meaningful way.

The legalist approach was reiterated in General Théophile Voirol's proposal, while he served as military commander of the colony, that the government should take measures to compensate Algerians who had incurred losses in the course of the invasion.[15] Again this was a quite remarkable claim, for its legalism was also based on an attendance to the views of Algerians, here in the form of the complaints of Hamdan ben Othman Khodja. Voirol alleged that his suggestion was an 'echo' of Khodja's critique of the illegality of France's behaviour in Algiers and the manner in which she had proved herself an unworthy representative of the values of the enlightenment and progressive civilisation which she claimed were expressed in the invasion of Algeria. As Khodja alleged, it was France which had 'reneged on her promises of a fair treaty-process [...] that the goods and property of locals have been pilfered by the French [...] that the French army has behaved barbarously and despoliated the land [...] that it was the victors who were savages and the defeated people the exemplars of civilization [...] and that the charitable donations and legacies held by religious foundations had been seized, with a consequent collapse in the welfare base of the city and a massive increase in misery and poverty'.[16]

In fact, those familiar with the later history of the colony might be somewhat surprised by the strength of the legalist camp and their promotion of benign and tolerant forms of rule at precisely that moment when the colony was at its least stable and most precarious. In September 1832, for instance, it was reported that d'Uzer 'had obtained great success in becoming both admired and respected by the indigènes'.[17]

This was evidently the product of the manner in which he sought to encourage submission to French rule, of which he said, 'the essence is that the Arabs never sense that we commit even the slightest injustice against them, for only then will their prejudices against us disappear'.[18] As he went on to say, 'what will be most difficult will be to destroy the fanaticism of Muslims towards us, such that we must protect their religion and their traditions'.[19]

The chief problem which legalists faced was of course not the blind hostility of their fanatical foes but the manner in which the message they sought to communicate to locals was undermined by their peers. For every d'Uzer there was a general and his troops who were insensitive to the great sense of injustice which their pillaging, summary executions and mutilations had on local populations. Writing in April 1833, an exasperated Brossard was moved to write that 'In three years, French rule has not sought to reconcile the moral and material interests of the metropole with those indigenous populations.'[20]

More generally, d'Uzer alleged that the piecemeal manner of French operations in the early years of the colony worked against the possibility that their rule might be perceived as just, particularly with regard to the French practice of co-opting local allies who might then be abandoned as easily as they were enjoined.[21] On this point, he wrote 'there is something quite barbaric in our conduct, for we compromise the lives of these Arabs in that we assure them of our protection and then abandon them when danger approaches'.[22] 'Our government', he wrote, 'does not wish to understand Africa.'

What is of especial interest in this writing is d'Uzer's use of the phrase 'il y a quelque chose de barbare dans notre conduite', for his invocation of French barbary chimed with Khodja's critique of French imperialism and stood in direct opposition to the idea that it was the French who were faced with the dangers of barbary in North Africa. D'Uzer chose his words carefully here for he wished to promote the idea of a beneficent imperialism, the spirit of which should be retained even in spite of the dangers and hardships which the army faced in the colony.

In 1836 the French articulated the principle that 'to decapitate one's vanquished foes was a revolting form of barbarism deserving meriting exemplary punishment', though in 1834 d'Uzer had contended that 'decapitations formed a part of the moral world of the Arabs' and that 'it would take them some time to abandon such customs'.[23] Through their own behaviour, the French should guide Algerians towards that path, not least because the army in Africa became implicated in such barbarity when it recruited local troops who would perpetrate atrocities

in France's name.[24] In September 1832, Soult had written approvingly to d'Uzer with regard to the latter's constitution of a court to try an Arab who was condemned to death, reminding the general of the rules which governed such war tribunals.[25]

The question as to how one should relate to the peoples of Algeria was evidently essential to the legalist position, which found its practical expression in the creation of the Bureaux Arabes. As well as demonstrating a willingness to engage in dialogue, rather than simply imposing order on the tribes, the Bureaux provided strategic value to the army in their effectiveness at improving relations with locals and facilitating their recruitment into the French army. Such was their initial success that General Tinan called upon the government to 'encourage the study of Arabic amongst the younger officers', for 'a lack of knowledge of the languages lies at the roots of many of the problems of the French occupation'.[26] This conviction that a civilised colonisation of the country might be achievable in practice as well as theory was a dominant motif in early despatches from the colony, though it was of course vigorously contested by those who asserted that domination should necessarily be punitive. This latter stance was given weight when local Arabs, such as Ibrahim Bey, dispensed advice on the best mode of governing Algeria, arguing that 'the Arabs wish for a harsh regime. They will prey on any sense of weakness.'[27]

The legalist position was very much associated with d'Uzer in the early colony and was notionally championed over a much longer period of time by Soult; though while the public Soult may often have advocated legalism and deplored French excesses, the private reality of his politics was that he accepted the co-existence of these two modes of engagement. Too much emphasis can be placed on the apparent conflict between Soult and Bugeaud,[28] when the reality was that it was very difficult to find questions on which they truly disagreed, however much it might have suited Soult, in placating French critics of the barbarism of the armée d'Afrique, to promote the idea that it was he who shielded Africans from a rapacious army. Soult, after all, had been an architect of the bloody French repression of a still earlier proto-guerrilla war in Andalusia, in which Combes wrote that 'war gained a new form of intensity, revealing itself to be more terrible than it had ever been before'.[29] And, as Gotteri noted, in spite of Bugeaud sometimes seeking to allege that the minister did not understand the situation in Algeria, 'in Spain, he [Soult] had practised a genre of war that was then deployed in Africa', just as Bugeaud had also participated in that conflict.[30] Such tactics were of course also familiar from an earlier African moment when thousands

of Turkish prisoners had been summarily executed by Napoleon in Egypt and from the bloodiness of the Chouannerie.[31]

To take one specific example of the manner in which Soult stood for legalism in name but not in practice, in May 1842 he wrote to Négrier to criticise the general for the way in which he had ignored due process in summarily punishing a group of murderous Arabs who had deserved to be brought 'to justice', 'For no matter what crimes or misdemeanours to which they stood accused, they ought to have been properly judged for them, while there was no case for the exercising of abuses of power which would engender grave criticisms and fall on the Governor General and the Government itself.'[32] Yet once these words were uttered, and Soult had dispensed with the formality of needing to articulate a legalist critique of Négrier's actions, he was keen to stress that his loyalties lay with his general (who was of course not punished for his actions, as a legalist framework would have implied). In fact, on reading the fullness of his letter, Soult expressed the hope that 'General Négrier will find new proof of the confidence I have in him and will recall the loyalty I have never ceased to show him since we first became acquainted'. If this was not proof enough of Soult's true position, he included a marginal note reading, 'This was a letter which needed to be written with a great deal of care.'

The legalist position was however most consistently apparent across the period in the dismay and anger which some French commanders and their superiors displayed with regard to the forms of violence deployed by French troops, especially when they descended to imitating local practices. In December 1836, Clauzel bemoaned the 'murders and pillage which were committed in the Sahel', again invoking the language of criminal law to describe the actions of soldiers on what was notionally a battlefield (the same Clauzel who had undertaken 'terrible massacring violence' in Blida in November 1830[33]).

In contradistinction the second very different French approach to tribal violence was that which saw itself as being more pragmatic and realistic in its view that Algerians could only truly be fought, and conquered, using the kinds of violence which they themselves viewed as being expressive of power and domination. Massacres and decapitations, it needed to be acknowledged, were a form of necessary evil, while truly civilisational imperialism would be an outcome of the conquest of Algeria rather than a means of arriving at this goal. Unsurprisingly, such arguments were not always advanced as fully as those made by the proponents of legalism, for it was understood that they lacked in moral force what they gained in practice in the heat of combat and the

construction of the colony. As time passed, however, and as the 'Algerian Question' began to seem more intractable and amenable to practical rather than idealistic 'solutions', pragmatic responses were articulated with greater confidence. As General Bardin wrote in 1840, 'Despite the respect we hold for Grotius and those Jewish, Greek and Latin writers on whom he draws, we fear that the idea of the laws of war will always be empty of meaning; we doubt whether law and war, massacres and justice, can ever be compatible.'[34]

The starkness of the differences between these two approaches in the very early colony was made plain in the so-called 'affaire Boyer', in which a French general had summarily executed 13 tribal leaders in Oran in November 1831 and May 1832. Such actions were strongly condemned by both Boyer's commanders and the Minister of War, Soult. General Savary explicitly 'disavowed' Boyer's actions, writing that 'he did not wish to suggest that such actions had his blessing' for they 'wronged the administration and had the effect of undermining all the work which, little by little', was being done in Algeria.[35] Savary wished that 'Arabs should enjoy the same justice which is accorded to our troops'. Soult reiterated this message in August 1832, describing the executions as 'violations of the law and of the most sacred duties of military command'. If such an event were to recur, Soult would ask that the king recall Boyer to France where he would himself be arraigned for trial.[36]

One of the most striking aspects of this case would appear to be the contrast between the righteous anger of Savary and Soult, and their appeal to a set of legal, ethical and human absolutes, in which Algerians merited the same moral treatment as Europeans, with the sanctions which were imposed on Boyer, who was merely warned as to his future conduct (as Julien rightly noted, Soult 'judged that these summary executions should not interrupt his career').[37] It seems likely that the nub of Boyer's 'crime' was in fact the manner in which he had incited local hatreds at a time when the relatively small French force in Algeria needed to avoid conflict wherever it could, such that it might concentrate its resources on holding the small extent of the territory it had conquered and acquiring the limited areas it coveted. Boyer, it was suggested, 'had done everything in his power to excite inter-tribal hatred',[38] while later in 1832 it was reported that 'the occupation of Oran was becoming more and more onerous by the day since the garrison was deprived of supplies from the locality because of the hatred the tribes felt for Boyer'.

In other words, Boyer was a political liability, who was most obviously attacked by his military peers using the moral language of legalism

and was made an exception of with the implication that the forms of violence he deployed against locals were wholly exceptional. In the 'affaire', Soult displayed a pattern of behaviour which would be repeated many times over in the following 20 years, in which he expressed public outrage when seemingly arbitrary French violence became a topic of controversy within the circles of power or, worse, in the press, while choosing to remain mute on the subject of the many similar cases to 'l'affaire Boyer' or to contemplate the possibility that such violence was a structural feature of French rule in Algeria.

Boyer, after all, had faced sanctions neither from his superiors nor Soult when, in 1831, he had not only executed but also decapitated the Moroccans Valenciano and Abd el-Salem, alleging that they were spies for the emperor of Morocco.[39] In private, it was quite clear that many of Boyer's peers, such as colonel Fitzjames, who 'offered his support to Boyer', saw nothing wrong in his actions, alleging that 'it was necessary to shake the imagination of people in a language they would understand' – in other words through decapitations and summary executions.[40]

While Savary wished to associate himself with the legalist position apparent in the affaire Boyer, our chief Algerian source from the period, Hamdan ben Khodja suggested that Savary had 'allowed for the arbitrary killing of a great number of people, including women, the elderly and children, without any legal basis'.[41] We know from ben Khodja's work that he was greatly concerned that his critique of French imperialism, which centred on the gap which existed between the French projection of their rhetorical beneficence and the actual brutality of the invaders, should not be overblown and should build its case on specific evidence of French atrocities, so it does not seem unreasonable to trust his denunciation of Savary. What is more, in February 1832, 17 tribal chiefs from the region around the capital wrote to the French king to specifically denounce the 'injustices' perpetrated by Savary – a rare condemnation of a specific commander, unparalleled in its uniting of disparate local tribes.[42]

It was not as though French commanders themselves did not recognise that they were perpetrating atrocities from the very earliest days of the colony. In July 1830, for instance, French troops perpetrated 'dégradations' in locals' houses in the country around Algiers,[43] while General Berthezène defended his officer Mendiry 'who was accused of arbitrary brutality' in his treatment of Algerians.[44] Even d'Uzer, the great champion of legalism, presided over baser forms of conflict, as was the case in May 1832 when his troops 'committed a number of excesses'

in their mounting a punitive raid against a tribe who had pillaged the Beni Urgin, who were allied to the French.[45] In October 1834 he was reported to have led a 'punitive expedition' against the Beni Sala, a term reserved for attacks which included the gravest forms of vengeance,[46] while in November 1836 the town of Blida was famously bombarded in revenge for the killing of three French officers. That same month it was reported that Clauzel was unhappy with the scale of French murdering and pillaging in the Sahel.[47]

A distinct logic built up around such punitive expeditions, for it became a convention that arbitrary killings and the destruction of whole villages came to be seen as appropriate responses to cases where tribes had somehow betrayed the French, either by switching their allegiances or attacking French troops or tribes allied to France. Thus, 'reprisals were authorized against the Hadjoutes, the Mouazïa and all the other brigands',[48] but when horrific reports emanated from such expeditions, generals and the minister of war often found means of disavowing the specific atrocities that had ensued. An earlier 1835 raid against the Hadjoutes had for example had ministerial approval, but Soult had disclaimed responsibility for the 'burning of villages'.[49] This form of denial, in which atrocities were authorised in the broadest of terms, such that those with political power would not need to concern themselves with the details of their enactment, became a common feature of the Algerian theatre of operations. A second excuse which might be offered was that 'those atrocities which were perpetrated can be attributed to the zouaves [local scouts]',[50] for it seemed both more reasonable and acceptable to allege that local Algerian allies were unable to wrest themselves from their own barbaric practices, than to admit that these constituted a key part of French strategy from the earliest days of the colony. French anxieties that they might be associated with such horrors are another mainstay of documents from the period, not simply because those who held power knew that it might be loosened if they were associated with such violence, but because there existed a general uneasiness with regard to the morality of these new forms of warring.

There is no doubt that the legalist discourse constituted a powerful set of ideas and practices in the early colony, but it is equally apparent that legalism was repudiated by some French commanders and that it often remained more of a theoretical ideal rather than a check on the practices of the army. For many soldiers the pragmatic notion that French violence should mirror the atrocities and excesses perceived in local cultures was possessed of a powerful logic. This form of acceptance was

initially made apparent in the practice of the army, but as the decade developed it would become a moral theory of warfare in its own right.

Attacks such as Savary's famous assault on the El Ouffia in the spring of 1832, in which 'men, women and children were massacred indiscriminately', became exemplars of a new kind of warfare.[51] As would be the case with the later notoriety of the killing of the Ouled Riah at Dahra in 1845, the wholesale massacre of the El Ouffia excited interest across Europe, inspiring, for example, derisive English accounts of French barbarism:

> Farhat's [an Arab chief] ambassadors left Algiers laden with rich presents. They had, among other gifts, received red burnuses of honour, embroidered with gold, such as the deys were wont to bestow upon mighty chiefs. A few hours from town they were plundered by Arabs of the tribe El-Uffia and robbed of their red burnuses. They returned to Algiers, complaining to the Duke, who just chanced to have an evening-party, and had gambled and taken wine. He rashly gave the order to one of the generals, a guest at the party, immediately to start with some troops and to destroy the tribe. The general took this order literally. For this sudden attack he chose two corps of the army most notorious for their cruelty, the Foreign Legion and the Chausseurs d'Afrique; in the dead of night he surrounded the encampments of the El-Uffia, which lay in the neighbourhood of the fortified 'Maison Carrée', and slaughtered the whole population; – old men silently awaiting the death-blow, women crying for mercy, and children, who did not know what was to befall them, were unmercifully slain by the sabre and the bayonet. The soldiers returned with rich booty, carrying in triumph gory heads on the tops of their lances and bayonets to the camp. There they feasted and revelled till the next night, in an inhuman way: not one of them seemed to repent their horrid deed.[52]

What such accounts invariably failed to register was the extent to which such massacres soon became a part of a system, for in their being narrativised as compartmentalised morality tales they tended to be treated as exceptional, personality-driven instances of war crimes, rather than the beginnings of a much more comprehensive French project in Algeria. Only Algerians could see beyond the immediacy of such violence to describe the structuring of a new horror across their land, for it was Hamdan Khodja who, in the words of Abdelkader Djeghloul, realised that the symbolic value of the razzia and such retributive French

violence lay less in 'its immediate effectiveness or its relation to the Algerian past' than in the manner in which it represented 'the dawn of a renaissance, the eruption of the future' into the Algerian present. A structuring of human relations was taking place which would create a long-lasting dark 'colonial night'.[53]

The razzia

The crystallisation into a defined theory was most apparent in the case of the razzia. Yet far from having a stable meaning, the razzia became the vehicle for changing forms of violence and domination through the 1830s, reaching its apogee under Bugeaud, for whom the razzia was the ultimate form of mimetic violence (using the term mimesis to indicate the French belief that they were mirroring local practices, the connection to the broader nineteenth-century French obsession with realism and the mimetic trope, and our understanding, drawn from critics of art and literature, that mimetic reflections are rarely to be trusted).

The first recorded mention of the term 'razzia' in the French military archives came in August 1833, when it was reported that the Bey of Constantine had launched a raid against a rival tribe.[54] It was, however, only when Bugeaud began to emerge as a dominant figure in the army, later in the decade, that French reports of local razzias became more frequent. In 1837, for instance, it was reported that the Hadjoutes had initiated a series of razzias, while the Bey of Constantine had mounted a 'grande razzia' against tribes to the south-west of the city who were allied to the French.[55] By 1843, the term was being used in a more general sense to indicate a military engagement, such as when the Harrar, a tribe allied to France, repelled an attack by Abd el-Kader when they had tried to take control of his smala.[56]

By contrast, the first French razzia was not actually accorded that title when, in May 1833, Desmichels attacked the Gharaba, an engagement in which the French sustained 2 deaths and 30 injured, while 200 of the tribe were killed and between 500 and 600 injured. Desmichels was reported as having confiscated 394 cattle and calves, 1200 sheep, 17 camels and 'a large number of goats and horses, as well as women, the old and children who were taken prisoner'.[57] From this last remark we can surmise that a good number of the men were summarily executed, for those groups who were spared are so carefully enumerated in order to stress a moral point pertaining to the boundaries of French violence. The other statistics presented bolster to such an idea, for in true military encounters from the period we tend to expect ten Algerians to

die for every French soldier, rather than the ratio of one to a hundred seen here.

Such executions were not the only feature of the raid which engendered controversy, for on 4 June 1833, Soult wrote that he 'disapproved of the army's profiting from the sale of livestock taken from the enemy'.[58] This distaste may well not have been feigned, though the confiscation of goods and animals was to become an important feature of French razzias for a series of reasons, with the significance of such rationales shifting over time. At these earliest moments, it seemed that confiscations were generally justified as a means of raising income for an army which perceived itself to be starved of funds by its metropolitan masters, while also affording the opportunity to reward underpaid ordinary soldiers who might profit from the booty they gathered. They also strengthened French ties to loyal tribes who benefited from the opportunity of acquiring scarce resources from a marketplace which was made more liquid through French captures. Later in the decade, the economic case for razzia would be developed by Bugeaud when confiscations were accompanied by the destruction of habitats as a means of liquidating tribes' economic potential.

The number of razzias reported in the period 1830–37 was very small indeed, with only the October 1833 raid of Schauenbourg on the El Krachna standing out, for it marks the first time the term 'razzia' was applied to a French operation.[59] It was only from 1838 that the razzia became a more formulated mainstay of the French war effort. This followed a period of relative calm when it appeared that legalist arguments generally held sway over the mimetic approach.

In November 1836, as we have read, however, three French officers had been killed in an attack on a base of Sidi Ayaich, near Mered, which occasioned a furious French response when they bombarded the town of Blida in a revenge attack.[60] This operation was significant for the manner in which it fused French rage with justification for the indiscriminate targeting of civilians as a just means of memorialising the three French officers. It in fact suggested, among other things, that the French army did not consider itself to be in any sense 'at war' in Algeria at that point in time, for if it had considered itself to be so, it could surely have tolerated this relatively small loss of life in a military encounter. Similar sentiments could be seen in which the army was reported to have 'exacted an exemplary form of vengeance' for the murder of a captain in the Topographical Service in January 1841, while in that same month 'the killers of the caid Mahmoud ben Hassen [a French ally] and Captain Paget were avenged, with the head of the ringleader responsible

for these killings placed in full view in the market at Bône'.[61] Again, the expressive, communicative function of such displays of violence was quite apparent.

The attack on Blida was part of a more general upsurge in atrocious French violence, apparent in press coverage of the behaviour of French officers during the first expedition to Constantine (December 1836–July 1837) and subsequent inquiries into the behaviour of the expeditionary corps, which led to its dissolution and Bugeaud's assignation to reprimand officers as to their behaviour.[62] This state of anxiety as to the level and forms of violence deployed by the French was emblemized by the events of 2 November 1836, when French soldiers walked back to their camp in Constantine brandishing the heads of 68 of their foes atop the blades of their bayonets. As Bernard wrote, 'We must not become accustomed to following this barbaric local practice and cannot under any circumstances accept that it become introduced amongst the French troops.'[63] The cutting and display of heads had evidently become customary among French soldiers, for in September 1837 we read that Trézel refused to authorise a claim to compensate a Kabyle tribe 'for eleven beheadings', which in itself offers something of a summary of the manner in which legalist and mimetic approaches coalesced in the army: in theory a French wrong was acknowledged, but in practice redress was denied to those who had suffered.[64]

The especial horror of such practices were that they were so easily made public, which hinted at a significant debate that would take place in Algeria over the following 15 years relating to the question as to when, or whether, it was useful to broadcast such displays of barbarity. The great advantage of such spectacles was that they were perceived as sending clear messages to France's foes, while also satisfying the desires of French troops. Soult and others primarily opposed such exhibits on the grounds that they diminished support for the colony in the metropole, though others argued against such practice on moral grounds. It was essentially the public character of such violence which was the chief problem for Soult, who had fewer qualms about massacres which lay unreported.

A pattern was evidently developing at this time in terms of dialogue between legalists and their mimetic opponents, in which the former group would strongly condemn the behaviour of the latter, yet since sanctions were only rarely imposed on troops, advocates of the mimetic approach rightly assumed that they could continue with impunity. In a sense, such an arrangement may have suited both sides equally well, for it allowed Soult and the legalist camp to express outrage with regard to

the atrocities committed by French troops, while commanders in Algeria could give the impression of following orders from Paris, while trying to minimise the number of such attacks that were revealed to their political masters.

In May 1841, for instance, Duvivier 'severely chastised the commanding lieutenant of the Maison Carrée for having ordered the decapitation of two indigènes'.[65] In October of that year, Soult expressed his 'incredulity' that 'the military authorities had decapitated two Arabs without trial', while in December he would 'severely reprimand' Négrier for having decapitated two Arabs who were accused of having killed a French officer.[66] The essential meaninglessness of this sanction was made plain when, just six months later, Nègrier found himself once again 'severely reprimanded' for exactly the same offence: in this case the summary execution of two Arabs who stood accused of meddling in local politics.[67] The message which we must imagine was quite clearly communicated to French officers in such affairs was that the French should not descend to the forms of barbarity deployed by their uncivilised foes, but if they were to do so there would be no form of blame beyond some general sense of moral censure.

A related and quite specific set of debates between legalists and mimetics then began to develop with regard to razzias, in which the value of such raids was questioned on both strategic and moral grounds. General Valée, in particular, revived an Uzerian legalism, arguing that war ought to be fought on principled grounds, which included 'the abolition of the practice of the razzia'.[68] He contested the decisions of his peers, openly castigating the behaviour of generals such as Guingret on their 'punitive expeditions'.[69]

Valée was quite explicit in claiming that two 'systems' of warfare were apparent in Algeria, contending that his own legalist approach represented the only means by which the French would be victorious, in contrast to the nihilism which underpinned mimetic violence:

> We must accept Algeria as she is, troubles and all. Climatic conditions have consigned a good portion of the army to our hospitals, for which the only solutions are the construction of more military facilities, along with the provision of beds and a good quality enriched diet for all soldiers [...] I am far from thinking that the war will end soon – for one cannot submit a people in a few days – but I believe that my system to be superior to that of expeditions and razzia without goals.[70]

Soon after, Valée wrote to Soult to express his happiness that, following a brief period when Soult had served as Prime Minister, he would return to the Ministry of War, writing that 'Africa counts on the care and watchfulness [bienveillance] which you have always shown her'.

Soult found a different tactical reason to fret as to the efficacy of razzias, noting, in March 1840, that he feared a new attack of great ferocity on the French strongholds of Mazagran or Arzew following a razzia on the Douair and the Sméla.[71] His especial fear was that 'armed Moroccan bands' would cross the border in defence of their coreligionists, so he asked Valée to redeploy two battalions of infantry from Oran and more generally advised his generals that they ought to pact with the tribes at that moment, offering cash incentives if necessary so as to ease the tensions which had been caused by these razzias.

Valée's 'system' would not disappear over the next 15 years, but it was clearly bested by the mimetics' championing of the razzia as the most efficient and appropriate mode of warfare in Algeria. The number of razzias launched by the French army grew very considerably over the period and, indeed, continued well after that moment in 1843 when even Bugeaud admitted that the war was over. The idea of the razzia and its systematisation benefitted precisely from its extremism and its nihilistic qualities, for in pushing an idea to its end point, French commanders became convinced that their amorality and determination would be better understood by Algerians.

The razzia was a form of violence predicated on two types of fear. The first was the French anxiety that they had been drawn into an endless conflict in Algeria which they might not win, in part because of the intractable strength of their foes. Bugeaud was wont to compare Abd el-Kader to the ancient general Jugurtha who had fought so valiantly against the earlier Roman imperium in Africa.[72] Jugurtha had, however, in the end been defeated, so while Bugeaud made great claims on the public purse and their patience, in the razzia he promised that he had found the means to finally pacify Algeria and begin the next chapter of her life as a colony.

The second form of fear induced by the razzia was evidently that which it was supposed it induced in the hearts and minds of France's foes. In this sense, the razzia was quite explicitly conceived of as a form of communication with Algerians, for while the razzia may have appeared malign, it purported to bear within it a kernel of beneficence, since it would ultimately encourage the quicker surrender of France's enemies, causing great losses in the short term while in the future notionally preserving a greater number of lives. While the French

notionally exported a civilisational imperialism which was expressive of the values of a modern and enlightened society, the razzia could be seen as medieval in its insistence on the constructive power of violence and, indeed, its assumption that war and politics were indistinguishable. As Brower noted:

> Disarticulating traditional social networks like the 'ashīra' (tribe) and targeting social bonds like 'asabiyya' (feelings of solidarity) became part of the process of conquest. Terror became the army's most important weapon in this struggle: kidnapping, summary executions, outright murder, torture and sexual assaults produced *metrus atrox*, the sense of 'terrible fear' that commanders thought would destroy existing social bonds and result in a docile population.[73]

According to Bugeaud it was the 'fear of a razzia' which was the greatest form of protection to vulnerable French convoys as they made their way around the country.[74] The razzia was the 'true form of warfare which one must deploy against Arabs' for it presented a stark and wholly comprehensible choice to the tribes: resist and die or pact and live.[75] It therefore ran alongside increased efforts to reach treaty arrangements with some tribes, for Bugeaud believed that 'the protection of tribes could not but encourage further submissions' to French rule.[76]

The violence of the razzia acquired a quite circular logic, in which, as was the case with the Beni Amer in May 1842, the tribe 'would only submit to force and once force disappeared', they would quickly return to their old ways.[77] A new language accompanied this order, with the same set of metaphors, euphemisms and codes repeated so frequently that the words themselves began to stand in for the thoughts of the French army. The Army invariably 'acted seriously' (agir sérieusement) on the tribes, imposing 'exemplary punishments' (un châtiment exemplaire), which would provide a 'harsh lesson' (leçon sévère), which would have a profound 'moral effect' (effet moral) and which was ultimately expressive of 'a great humanity' (un grand humanité). It is hard to stress quite how commonplace such language became, most especially the idea of the 'effet moral' which was central to the ideology of communicative violence or the 'excellent effet' produced, for instance, by 'la belle ghazia' the Governor General spoke of in February 1843.[78]

Violence itself was often categorised using a language of 'energy' and 'severity'. In April 1842, for instance, Bugeaud reported to Soult that de la Moricière's Mascara division had displayed 'an activity, a perseverance and an energy which it would be hard to understate'.[79] Troubles in the

Cercle of Dellis with the Agha, Ben Zamoun, meant that 'severe measures would have to be taken against him so as to remind him of his duties' in the form of an 'exemplary punishment'.[80] Similarly, in February 1843, St Arnaud wrote to the Governor General to report that the recalcitrant Beni Ferrah had been 'severely punished [...] with a great deal of firmness and vigour'.[81] The assuredness that such punishments produced their desired effects could be seen in letters such as General Le Bar's to Soult on 9 June 1842 in which he described an attack on the Mouzaza, who had reneged on a treaty with the French, in which 'the punishment produced a fortunate result'.[82] This surrender was praised by the Minister in his reply, who noted that 'the results he obtained will undoubtedly dissolve the indecision of the tribe'.[83]

By contrast, the effects of French violence on Algerians and their bodies tended to be elided or described in the most euphemistic of ways, in stark contrast to the ways in which the decapitated and beheaded corpses of the tribes' victims (of both occasional French soldiers and inter-tribal violence) merited a much more graphic register. In August 1840, for instance, a group of German colonists were reported to have committed 'imprudences'.[84] Violence, indeed, appeared not to be enacted upon individuals, but upon tribes or 'populations' that were in some sense dehumanised through their being possessed only of collective identities. Even in cases where we know that women and children were massacred, their bodies were never memorialised, while there was also frequent resort to the passive voice as a means of imputing responsibility for the deaths of Algerians to inanimate forms such as smoke, flames or the environment more generally.[85] A similar form of pathetic fallacy, and evasive use of indirect forms, is seen in Ducuing's military memoir of the same moment in which Bugeaud's campaign in Dahra is defended. According to Ducuing, 'the resistance was terrible and even heroic; but it was also futile, for our bayonets and our shells produced their customary effects'.[86]

In Bugeaud's pronouncements, and perhaps in his own mind, the razzia acquired a neatness which was scarcely borne out in closer examination of French campaigning in the period. Bugeaud was keen to suggest that there was an almost scientific form of organisation at work in his 'system' and one can see the way in which the rapid increase in the use of razzias constituted a means of attempting to impose order on the chaotic Algerian environment.[87] His razzias were certainly 'systematic' in the sense that they became the single most important form of engagement with locals, but it is important not to be seduced by the aspirational picture of order and structure which it was suggested

underpinned such raiding. For one thing, there were many different types of razzias. Razzias also had different goals at different moments, and their character and purpose changed considerably over a relatively short period of time between 1837 and 1843. While it was clearly in Bugeaud's interests to describe an idea of the razzia which was clear and straightforward to elite French audiences, the practice of razzias was rather more complicated, in terms of the motives which lay behind them and their outcomes.

5
The Evolution of the Razzia, 1837–47

The practice and the ideology of the razzia was by no means static, with at least four forms evolving over the period 1837–47. First there were those motivated by fairly strict military strategic motives, including razzias determined to avenge French losses (which were the successors to earlier 'punitive expeditions'); second, those which were chiefly driven by economic goals; third, those which had as their aim the complete destruction of the habitats and lifeworlds of portions of the Algerian population; and, finally, those which had an additional exterminatory purpose. In rough terms, there was a gradual shift towards the last of these forms.

The perception that the razzia certainly needed to become a more revolutionary form of warfare, which stood some chance of more forcefully resolving the Algerian Question, was quite apparent in the thinking of French soldiers in the late 1830s. To take one example, in 1837 Lieutenant General Baudrand wrote of the situation in the colony:

> While it is true to say that we have nearly always played the role of assailants here, it is also true to say that in our attacks we have almost always found ourselves on the defensive. If the Arabs have only rarely been able to stop the march of our columns, for our part we have only been able to push back their assaults, without being able to adequately pursue them so as to impose considerable losses which might enable them to more fully feel the horrors of war and to understand the logic of our actions on them.[1]

French violence up until this point had, therefore, failed on a strategic and, more importantly, a communicative level. It was quite plain in the military mind that only when Algerians were able to reflect upon

the 'horrors of war', which ought to be visited upon by them in more planned and premeditated ways, would there be any chance of making real progress. Behind such rhetoric lay that counterintuitive defence of increasingly brutal forms of French violence which insisted that such atrocities were inherently humanitarian in the manner in which they hastened a lasting peace between peoples.

Under Bugeaud such views gained the status of an uncontested orthodoxy, yet we have seen that responsibility for the razzia 'système' lay as much with Soult and the government in Paris as it did with the office of the Governor General. Just as it was easy for the idea of all resistance in Algeria to be loaded onto the personality of Abd el-Kader, it has proved equally simple for Bugeaud to play the role of the great architect of the increased violence of the late 1830s and the '40s. As we will see in detailed considerations of the correspondence of field commanders, the Governor General and the Ministry, there was a confluence of interest between all three groups and the idea that responsibility ought to lie solely with Bugeaud is hard to sustain. While Soult was apt to play the legalist card in denouncing what were claimed to be exceptional instances of French barbarity, he was equally likely to praise such activity, while there is no evidence that the careers of those who perpetrated such violence were marred in any way. As Frémeaux noted of the similar relationship between field commanders and their men, 'superior officers disapproved of such excesses only very rarely'[2], quite clearly because a convergence of interests and strategy was shared across the chain of command from ordinary soldiers to ministers in Paris.

Military razzias

The simplest form of military razzias appeared to be those raids which were launched against enemy tribes, such as those initiated by the garrisons at Sétif and Philippeville against 'hostile tribes' in April 1841.[3] Slightly more complex were those razzias which had as one of their chief goals the communication of information or the sending of messages, the most common of which was the idea that the tribes would ultimately be better off under French rule than they would under the protection of Abd el-Kader. There was a strand of legalist thought in Bugeaud's account of such razzias, for he insisted on the importance of capturing prisoners, 'especially women for that will engender despair amongst local populations and anger which will make it harder for the khalifas to govern such people'.[4] Thus on Christmas Day of 1841 we read that La Moricière captured 70 prisoners in the course of a razzia.[5] The

communicative function of the razzia was stressed in the work of general Changarnier and Lieutenant Pellé, whose razzias of January 1842 'had the effect of proving to the Arabs that there would be no rest for them [...] and that their chiefs were powerless to offer them protection'.[6] Such a strategic message was therefore one which was designed for the consumption not only of tribal leaders but also of ordinary populations, whom the French hoped would turn against their chiefs' campaigns of resistance.

This conceptualisation and rationale for the razzia is of great importance, for it establishes the idea that the French believed that the specific violence of the razzia was one of the most effective means they had in their dialogue with ordinary Algerians. Its conversational function was again apparent in Bugeaud's remarks at the start of 1843:

> Going against the Zerdeza and the other tribes who lie close to our line of communications between Bône and Constantine and between Constantine and Philippeville, we must destroy [écraser] them through the superiority of our forces in order to make a real example of them, to intimidate those who would go against us, whilst consolidating the loyalty of those who have submitted.[7]

In the case of the Zerdeza, Bugeaud's wish was fulfilled for these razzias had the effect of ensuring their submission, as well as providing several thousand heads of cattle.[8] More generally we would do well to focus on the connection in Bugeaud's mind between the idea of the destruction of tribes and the message which this was believed to send to the population at large.

This communicative function was equally apparent in a whole series of subsets of razzias with primarily military motivations. These included the punishment of a tribe who had welcomed members of the Foreign Legion who had chosen to defect to their camp (in itself an interesting rupturing of the idea of the monolithic unity of purpose of the armée d'Afrique). On hearing of this in May 1842, the Minister was moved to write that:

> Randon moved against the Ouled Hann to punish them for having welcomed 29 deserters from the Foreign Legion and for having refused to give them up; but even while praising the conduct of our troops, I regret the losses they sustained, even though those of our enemy were far more considerable. The loss of Arab blood will never compensate for the spilling of French blood, while I hope that the

> severe lesson given to the Ouled Hann will prove profitable in the future and will lead to further submissions.[9]

Similar ministerial enthusiasm for such forms of razzias was much evident, as was the case in July 1842, when Soult wrote, 'I applaud the punishment which he [Bugeaud] doled out to that part of the Sbéah based on the left bank of Cheliff, who refused to hand over the hostages which were demanded of them.'[10] These were the tribes of whom de Castellane wrote, 'The Sbéah tribe has always been known as a body of about the boldest reprobates in Africa. Even in the time of the Turks, there were no miscreants like them. [...] Under French rule it has been found necessary to *grind* the Sbéahs – if I may use the expression – in order a little to mollify them. Repeated razzias could alone effect this.'[11]

Similarly, and also in 1842, those tribes who refused to surrender merited great punishment, such as the Beni Kallud who needed to be 'threatened with being utterly pillaged and devastated to best their obstinacy'.[12] A similar fate met those who opposed any aspect of French policy, such as the 'tribes of the Sahel' 'punished' in July 1842.[13] Finally, there was the question of the adhesion to the French cause of those tribes who had sided with them, whose loyalty was utterly proved by their having taken part in attacks on their fellow countrymen, such as the tribes of the Aghalick of Djendel whom Bugeaud adjudged to have been 'utterly compromised by their having contributed to the enormous ghazia executed by General Changarnier on the 1st of July'.[14]

Resource razzias

The second important goal of razzias, or arguably category of such attacks, was the capture of resources. A classic example of such a raid can be found in an administrative note of April 1840:

> The poverty of the pastoral lands immediately around Mostaganem acts as an incentive to attempt razzias on the isolated herds which lie far from the town. This will have the effect of restricting the quantity and quality of hay which can be harvested, which will prove costly and delay the harvest. Meanwhile the herds of the [French] administration are dying due to shortages of suitable foodstuffs.[15]

This particular razzia stands as a perfect emblem of raids founded on the idea of capturing resources, for it makes plain their double benefit to the French: just as locals would be deprived of their wealth

and well-being, the French occupation would gain in strength as its being underresourced was compensated for by the confiscation of local goods. Economic war was an obvious complement to the military razzias described above, for it too would have the effect of demoralising local populations and diminishing their capacity to resist the French army. It was also expressive of the manner in which this form of razzia was a policy which was authentically *colonial*, as opposed to one directed from the metropole, for it addressed the grievance of the army that they were not fully supported by governments in France and asserted their right to find their own solutions to such dilemmas.

It was therefore unsurprising that figures such as Soult felt ambivalent about such razzias, for they simultaneously contravened the norms of legalism, entrenched local power at the expense of metropolitan control and deviated from the general strategy of peace-making rather than fostering war. If one was possessed of a conspiratorial turn of mind, one might think the economic razzia a perfect form of political device for Bugeaud and his military peers who wished to establish an independent power base or military colony in Algeria. The greater the conflict they fomented through such raiding, the more stridently they could call for increases in men and resources, which Paris would find hard to resist if such raiding was described as being critical to ensure France's hold upon her possession.

Soult was especially concerned with the division of the spoils of war, trying to insist upon clear sets of rules such that the booty of war was the property of the state rather than the army, and that it belonged to the collective rather than to individuals. Soldiers in Algeria evidently held to a rather different view of things, for generals saw such goods as being critical in terms of their providing resources and in battling their foes, while they valued the opportunities such booty provided to reward and inspire underpaid and often demotivated troops.[16]

Soult proposed that captured livestock should be placed in so-called 'administrative parks', though in practice he struggled to ensure that captures were despatched to such places.[17] The conflict between the two centres of power came to a head in 1842, when Soult accused a French general, La Moricière, of a 'grave fault in distributing amongst his officers cattle and horses which had been captured on a razzia'.[18] The case wore on for a number of months, with Soult alleging that he was wholly dissatisfied with the actions of La Moricière and the general asserting that he 'had not neglected the needs of the administration in the manner in which he had divided the cattle taken from the tribes', which suggests that at the very least Soult wished to establish a distinction

about booty which was collected for the public good rather than private pockets (in theory only one-third of booty was to be kept and the remainder reserved for the Trésor Public).[19] La Moricière's special dereliction was his having established his own commission to compensate officers for their losses on missions – such as that of April 1842 which awarded his men 3,833 francs, as well as 936 francs for their guides and 138 sheep for Arab allies – which Soult adjudged 'intolerable' since this devolved a ministerial power to a local source of authority, while La Moricière was additionally castigated for having favoured some officers over others, ignoring most ordinary soldiers and having dispensed with useful livestock.[20]

What should not be underestimated was the desperation for food as a motive for both French attacks on tribes and occasional raids upon French settlements. In November 1841, for instance, Ben Thami and Miloud Ben Arach, who were French allies, launched attacks on tribes who refused to hand over their crops of barley to the occupation forces, killing 27 in the process.[21] In November 1841, La Moricière reported that 'the khalifas of Mascara and Tlemcen had vainly attempted to recapture the silos of grain' which he had seized in the course of a razzia. In this raid 7 French soldiers were killed and 33 injured, with, we must assume, much larger casualties among the tribes, which reveals a great deal about the imperative that controlling food resources had become by this point, not so much for reasons of strategy, but simply in terms of keeping one's people alive.[22] This much is made plain in military memoirs from the period, such as De Castellane's report on a raid of 1843:

> The razzia succeeded beyond all hope. [...] thanks to the measures taken by our commandant, we made, despite our small number, considerable captures. At eight o'clock in the morning we rejoined the Colonel, bringing with us thirty-four prisoners, a hundred and seventeen oxen, ten horses, mules, thirty asses, and fifteen hundred sheep and goats, having killed besides twenty Arabs. There was abundance for three months. Joy was on all faces, and our ordinary dinner became a festival.[23]

The capacity of such razzias to feed and bring joy to French troops becomes more comprehensible when we look at examples of the quite incredible numbers of animals and goods captured by the French in the course of their razzias. In May 1840 Galbois captured 40,000 cattle from the Harakta while in November 1840 around 8000 sheep and a few hundred other animals were seized from a tribe who had defected from their

alliance with the French.[24] In January 1841 the Médéa garrison seized 1500 sheep, 150 cattle and 40 other animals, along with 32 prisoners.[25] Later that month, La Moricière's troops undertook a series of raids on the Gharaba and the khalifa of Mascara, which led 'to the re-supply of meat' for the troops as well as an approving comment that the tribes were taking cattle and horses to be sold in the markets – presumably because of their impoverishment following the razzia.[26]

In March 1842, 2406 head of cattle were taken across seven razzias, which yielded a profit of 57,643.97 francs when they were sold.[27] That month the French also launched a 'monster razzia' on the Hachem Gharaba in which they 'took a great number of animals, men, women, children and 100 fighting men'.[28] The razzias of May yielded 426 prisoners, more than 6000 head of cattle and a 'considerable quantity of booty', while two razzias in February had generated more than 40,000 francs.[29] In June Changarnier captured 3000 prisoners, 1500 camels, 300 horses and 50,000 cattle in a raid in the Chélif, while the same general acquired 200 camels, 400–500 cattle, 10,000–12,000 sheep, horses, donkeys and 'an immense quantity of booty' when he raided the tribes of the Ouarsensis, losing 25 men and killing between 170 and 175 of the tribe.[30] In October d'Arbouville also collected 'a considerable booty' along with 175 women, 60 horses, 150 mules, 1200 sheep and 200 cattle, as well as 'beheading 60 men'.[31] That this last fact was mentioned almost as an aside is revealing of the manner in which it had become quite normal practice on razzias for the men of the tribe to be summarily executed while booty was collected.

In June 1843, 1173 cattle, 2152 sheep and 91 horses and mules were sent to Guelma following a series of razzias.[32] In September, Bedeau and Tempoure undertook a razzia against the Ouled Daoud which yielded 800 camels, loaded with goods, 900 cattle, 10,000 sheep and quantities of donkeys, horses and mules.[33] In October, de Barras, the commander of Sidi-Bel-Abbès, raided the Djaffra, capturing 3000 sheep, 500 cattle, 100 donkeys and a number of horses and camels. The strategic and persistent nature of this campaign of razzias was revealed in de Barras's note that 'in five months this tribe have lost more than 250 war horses and at least an equivalent number of their riders, as well as 1200 camels, more than 2000 cattle, more than 30,000 sheep and an enormous booty'.[34] In fact, a report from Baraguy d'Hilliers revealed that over the course of 1843, the contribution of razzias from the province of Constantine alone was 865,192 francs.[35] In the course of such raids, the French also contrived to convince themselves that such confiscations ought to be

seen as acts of beneficence, as when Colonel Comman wrote to Bugeaud in July 1842 to enumerate the tithes imposed on local tribes by El-Berkani, which it was claimed were much greater than those proposed by the French and, most significantly, 'they would pay only once' in the French system, rather than systematically to their more powerful tribal neighbours, though the longer term costs to the tribe of submission to the French evidently lay absent from Comman's calculations.[36]

The point of setting out these acquisitions in detail is to make plain how complete was the triumph of mimetic violence in the practice of the razzia. The French began to preside over a rustling economy which they imagined mirrored the traditional forms of the society which they had conquered. As with so much of the culture of mimesis, French reworkings of the razzia extended, altered and warped Algerian raiding into something which became quite new and different. For one thing, the scale of French raiding was of an order quite unlike the sporadic capture of goods which had occurred before their arrival. Solely considering the attacks summarised above, the French captured more than 170,000 animals from their foes in less than three years. This greater magnitude of seizures evidently had the capacity to genuinely impoverish and disrupt local economies in a way which was quite different to the razzias of the past, which, as we will see, was quite apparent and became a goal of the French. The very fact that the French paid such careful attention to enumerating their spoils of war was suggestive of its importance as a weapon, while it also rather gave the lie to the French myth that the Indigènes were poor stewards of their land who had allowed its productivity to wane terribly from its classical peak.

The ideology of the economic razzia and the manner in which it added to the conversational repertoire with Algerians was made plain by de Castellane:

> Most of the Flittas had taken refuge, with their flocks, in the woods, so we were obliged again to begin our razzias, and carry on the war against the corn and cattle of the enemy, in which consisted all their resources. It is, in fact, only by the possession or the destruction of these two species of property, that we can exercise any influence over the Arabs. The African razzia, which has been such a fertile theme for the declamation of great orators and of opposition journalists, which has been called *organised robbery*, is simply a repetition of what takes place in Europe under another name. What is war? A hunt of interests.[37]

The importance of the metaphor of the hunt, so popular in Africa, brings to mind the necessary extinction of one's prey. The idea of the hunt was also invoked to express the idea that an honourable officer class conducted their operations in Algeria in a manner akin to the regulated world of the hunt, in which a game was played within the confines of a set of moral parameters (though little recognition was paid to the fact that Algerians were as oblivious as foxes to the ethical nuances of such play). The smoking out of the Flitta, de Castellane wished to insist, was a course which was followed only very reluctantly once it was established as being the only position on the board to which his troops might move:

> Our position was certainly a difficult one. How were we to extricate ourselves? To attack our assailants in front would have been certain death, to turn their flank was impossible; nevertheless, it was necessary, at any cost, to overcome the obstacle. In vain we menaced the enemy, in vain we promised to spare their lives; they were deaf to all menaces to all persuasions. What was to be done? Nothing, but to have recourse to the eloquence of action, to smoke the fox out of his hole.[38]

Lifeworld razzias

The motivations for and the consequences of such 'economic razzias' merged into those of a third quite distinct form of raid, 'the lifeworld razzia', which had as its specific goal the strangling of the economic and social bases which afforded the survival of tribal society in Algeria. This was the most original and 'advanced' form of razzia in the colony, for it moved furthest from the conception of early French razzias and local antecedents.

In practice it was rarely utterly distinct from military or economic razzias, but its defining marks were its determination to eliminate recalcitrant tribes, either through massacres or through the destruction of their habitats and resources. Looking at economic razzias which might be seen to transition towards such 'lifeworld razzias', one might cite Bugeaud's raid on the Chélif in May 1842 – in which 'at least forty men were killed' in addition to the usual confiscations – and Tempoure's raid on the Djaffra the following year which specifically mentioned that the tribe continued to resist in spite of the defeats they had suffered and the 'misery' which had been enjoined upon them through these defeats and the massive eradication of their goods and economy.[39] Such 'misery' became the chief goal of lifeworld razzias which, understanding that it

would be impossible to physically annihilate every enemy in the country, continued to invest great faith in the communicative capacity of the razzia, hopeful that there would come a point where the experience of suffering would encourage widespread submission to French rule.

This sense of the performative and dialogic function of razzias was quite apparent to French commanders and their foes. In May 1840, the occupation of Mouzaïa and 'the destruction of harvests' was reported to have 'greatly worried the tribes'.[40] Owing to severe droughts which had blighted harvests in the metropole, French troops were in fact under orders to preserve foodstuffs in the colony. Their own situation was worsened by the attacks 'Arab bands' launched across the province of Algiers in which they 'burned haystacks which were destined to provision the army in Africa' or attacks on the reapers of the corn.

Lifeworld razzias developed in part as a response to the frustrations felt by soldiers in the early colony, who feared that the slipperiness of their foes and their ability to depend upon an ecology which lay out of the invader's reach pointed to the intractability of this conflict:

> Just as we begin our offensives, the Arabs spirit their women and their herds to safety. They have no other riches part from those which are stored in their 'silos', but these silos are hidden with great care and up to this point in time we have little luck in finding them. Here then are the only means by which we can seize these shifty Arabs: we must, at all costs, find their silos, seize their women, their children, their herds, taking the women and children as hostages and the herds to feed our soldiers and to impose some of the costs of this war upon our enemies.[41]

Part of the appeal of the lifeworld razzia to Bugeaud and his peers would appear to be the manner in which it imposed a sense of order and clarity on a territory which they felt their predecessors had made more complex and nuanced than it had needed to be. Tribes now faced a stark choice in their parlays with the French: either they absolutely accepted French rule then and in the future or they and their worlds would be destroyed. The simplicity of this equation was quite apparent in Bugeaud's orders to Baraguey d'Hilliers in the campaign of May 1841 that he must destroy [the towns of] Boghar and Taza, burning the harvests and the mountain huts of the Mitidja, 'excepting only those tribes who had submitted' to the French, while ensuring that all new submissions he secured came with 'all of the required guarantees'.[42] This last admonition reflected another feature of the proposed decisiveness of lifeworld razzias, for it

spoke to generals' frustration with the manner in which many tribes would renege on agreements they made with the French.

The times in which such behaviour might have been deemed tolerable had now passed. There was after all a beneficence-based argument which drove Bugeaud's strategy of the lifeworld razzia, for it was built upon the conviction that a better Algerian society would emerge if only a decisive break could be made from the tribal culture of the past. Like many strands of civilisational beneficence, Bugeaud's claim was only morally plausible if such a clear form of rupture was achievable, and if one accepted the idea that beneficent intentions served to justify any form of maleficent act. Such logic also arguably underpinned the idea that decisive forms of violence would more quickly deliver true forms of peace as compared with the piecemeal culture of war and negotiation which had characterised the earlier colonial moment. These ideas are quite plain in Bugeaud's correspondence from October 1841, where he wrote that in spite of waiting in vain for the submission of the tribes, he had not 'lost hope of success', by which he meant to indicate absolute and irrevocable triumph of the kind described above.[43]

'The razzia' was, according to Bugeaud, 'the only means we have at our disposition'.[44] It was this absolutist conviction that the razzia truly was the last possible means by which France should succeed in Algeria – a view which was of course much contested in France – which opened the gate towards ever-increasing and more fantastic forms of violence against Algerians. The orders which were despatched with regard to the destruction of crops and habitats were quite clear: in his razzia Bourjolly needed to 'burn their harvests and their huts [...] cutting down their fig and their fruit trees'. La Moricière's goal had to be 'to destroy the emir's troops and, most especially, to prevent the tribes from cultivating their land'.[45] As Pélissier, after Bugeaud, remarked, 'Wherever we go in Africa, men flee and the trees disappear.'[46]

Operational reports from the period make it quite plain that such orders were gladly and comprehensively fulfilled. In March 1843, Saint-Arnaud 'fought all day, whilst also burning the villages and cutting the trees' of the Beni Menacer.[47] The following month Changarnier put down the third revolt of this tribe, ensuring that 'not a house was left standing, also cutting down immense numbers of fruit trees, and collecting a great deal of booty, including 3000 cattle and 120 prisoners'.[48]

At that same moment Baraguey d'Hilliers was leading a similar operation against the Kabyles of Collo, deploying a spare form of celebratory description in his account of the operation: 'we set the whole place

ablaze such that the mountains themselves appeared to be on fire [...] we cut down their fig trees and their olives, whilst our horses ate those crops which remained on the ground'.[49] Such razzias incurred the wrath of Soult who reproached Baraguey d'Hilliers for his actions and for the fact that he sustained considerable losses on his missions, which he failed to account for in his 'insufficiently detailed' reports.[50] 'The destruction of fruit trees on a grand scale was an absurdity', according to Soult, for 'by such actions we make ourselves irreconcilable enemies'. Bugeaud, Soult thought, wished to destroy the harvests of the Kabyles so as to give the impression that the province was wholly pacified, which in Soult's eyes was evidently a false picture of a territory where enmity between colonists and the colonised was increasing rather than waning.

Bugeaud, he feared, was not even fully aware of quite what had happened during Baraguey d'Hillier's razzias, which might seem a rather strange claim, for it seems likely that Bugeaud was well aware of the full horror and scale of destruction of such engagements. After all, only one month before, Bugeaud had boasted of the success of the razzia, claiming that 'today the tribes have become convinced of their powerlessness and that of their emir. They have become shaken by terror and have begun to plead and argue with those who would incite them to revolt.'[51]

Soult, however, would have been aware that such raids in 1843 formed a part of perhaps the third or the fourth campaigning season of razzias, the logic of each of which had been the definitive resolution of the Algerian question. He must also have been aware of correspondence sent to the French government by tribal leaders on this question which explicitly made the claim that they would not be terrorised into submission by the army's razzias, such as the note of 19 June 1841 which asserted that 'we are no means ruined because you have burned our harvests and cut down our trees [...] even if you stay here for a century, all of your tricks will do us no harm'.[52]

This claim was a startling one for its defiance was focused on what was for Bugeaud and his allies the defining characteristic of razzias – their communicative qualities – and rather than seeing this dialogic power as a strength, it viewed it as a weakness which proved only the limits of French rule. The message razzias were intended to send was that the French were willing to use any form of violence in order to bring peace to Algeria and that in so doing the French believed themselves to be adopting and adapting the norms of local society. However, while this letter reveals that local leaders understood the motivations behind France's tactics, the razzia had not come close to extinguishing Algerian

resistance to French rule. It had instead delivered a clear message that the French were essentially a barbarian people with designs on eliminating the Indigènes, which evidently inspired more profound forms of resistance to the invaders, such that they might imagine a better world in a liberated future.

If the first type of lifeworld razzia concentrated on the destruction of crops and the confiscation of livestock, a variant on this approach focused on the destruction of towns and villages. From the start of Bugeaud's campaigning, it was quite clear that he saw the demolition of settlements as being an important goal of razzias, beginning with the obliteration of a whole series of Kabyle villages in September 1841 and the town and fort at Saida that October.[53]

The destruction of settlements was a particular feature of French tactics in the Kabylie, where it was recognised that especially clear messages needed to be despatched, since not only were the Kabyles even more inimically hostile to French (or any outside) rule, but many lay far from the centres of French power such that it was easier for them to slip away from French control after they had appeared to be successfully pacified. Histories of nineteenth-century Algeria tend to stress an apparent French preference for the Kabyles over Arabs, based on the so-called 'Kabyle myth' which attributed the virtues of sedentary pastoralism (supposedly a legacy of the memories of Roman agriculture in the region) as opposed to the feckless nomadism of the deracinated Arabs.[54] This might have been true on the pages of racial texts but it was largely erroneous in terms of French engagements with Kabyles in the 1830s and '40s, which were characterised by especial levels of violence.

This was apparent in Bugeaud's expedition to Dahra in April 1842, where he sought to gain control of the khalifalik of Mohammed Ben Allal Ben M'Barek and the territory of El-Berkani, 'this vast and difficult country which has not previously been touched by the war'.[55] On the expedition he destroyed a whole series of villages as well as a renowned pilgrimage site, which an army correspondent claimed 'produced a great moral effect'.

What is of course interesting about this particular engagement is that the writer of this letter was utterly mistaken as to the effect of Bugeaud's actions. They did indeed have a 'great moral effect' but rather than impressing the force of French strength upon the locals, the razzia merely generated antagonism and confirmed the dangers which the French posed to the people of the region. We know this because Dahra would later become the site of the most notorious razzia in the history of the French occupation of Algeria when, in 1845, Pélissier,

under Bugeaud's command, asphyxiated hundreds of villagers in the caves above the town. 'Dahra' became a global scandal when details of the attack were inadvertently made public, and it has of course become the centrepiece in much scholarship and fictional work on the early colony, but in the context of the pacification of the Kabyles it was both unsurprising and unexceptional. The only real difference between the events of 1845 and those of 1841 was that the press discovered the gruesome details of the later incident, whereas the earlier atrocities went unrecorded outside of the files of the French Army in Africa. That earlier episode re-emphasised the rationalisation that the distance at which an area lay from French centres of power, along with the difficulty of its terrain, justified special levels of decisive violence, for whereas the French would habitually encounter tribes around the major population centres, they only travelled to Kabylie with the aim of specifically addressing its people and the problems they posed for French rule.

The environmental character of such lifeworld razzias, in which a form of complete solution to France's problems in Algeria was imagined as a difficult landscape *and* people were conquered, while also providing sustenance for their conquerors, is apparent in much army reporting from the early 1840s. To take one example, Bugeaud wrote to Paris in April 1842 to announce that 'he had the honour to report that the moment had come to act seriously against that chain of mountains which extend from the Metidja to the west', as though the massif and its inhabitants were one.[56] While Baraguey d'Hilliers had successfully burned the harvests of a part of this region, much of its 'vast surface' 'remained perfectly intact', in part because of the combined dangers posed by the 'bellicose character' of its inhabitants and the challenging topography of the land (its 'labyrinth of rocks and ravines').[57] Earlier that week, Bugeaud had written that 'war is fed by war, and that is how you shall our work will be done! We will attack the Hachem right across their land, forcing them into retreat after retreat, such that neither the mountains nor the deserts will offer them shelter from our blows. Ultimately, they will be forced from their lands.'[58]

Once the razzia began a great deal of energy was expended upon transforming this from a place of safety to a wasteland; gardens, houses, orchards, full of 'delicious fruit' were destroyed, while Bugeaud had every confidence that 'the destruction of this place must produce a great moral effect on the Arabs'.[59] This dialogic effect was critical – 'It was my object' – for Bugeaud admitted that the area held 'no military importance'.

The importance of demanding that the land also provide for the French army was made plain as Bugeaud feared that they were running out of supplies for their own animals, sending them to a fertile valley where there were sure to be hidden silos. The means by which the army gained access to these redoubts was made plain allusively in Bugeaud's words as he wrote of the 'the destruction of a number of villages which we came across'.[60] The added strategic advantage of such devastation came from the fact that the 'lazy' and 'sedentary' culture of the Kabyles was caused 'greater pain' than would be the case with Arabs.

One successful lifeworld razzia which was described in detail for Bugeaud was that which was undertaken by Colonel Brabaud in the valley of the Ouerz in June 1842, whose correspondence began by describing the manner in which, having traversed a ravine, 'cattle were seized, houses burnt and goods taken'.[61] Looking out over this hostile environment, sense was made of the landscape by France's actions, for 'at dawn, once all the provisions had been gathered, a great fire indicated the route which our columns had followed'. Here, culture – in the form of burning – trumped nature – in the form of the terrain and its inhabitants.

Brabaud then reported that he had seized a number of prisoners, including 22 women and a few men, 'but not wishing to be responsible for feeding such "useless mouths" ["Ne voulant pas me charger de ces bouches inutiles"] and wanting to see whether an act of generosity might have some influence over the Arabs', he released them back to the tribe along with the donkeys he had seized on the razzia. This kindness was understood to have sent a message that unless the tribe pacted with the French 'and unless they did so promptly, I would burn and raze all of the tribes who surrounded me'.[62] Again, the logic and causality of the cultural, civilisational offer was apparent in an equation in which the land and its people would burn if they failed to grasp the humanity of such an offer. As Frémeaux wrote, 'If it was the conferral of massive power on the officer class which in part explained the razzia, it might also be seen as the source of the abuse committed by their men who were encouraged in systematic forms of pillaging. The stated aim of razzia was to menace tribes with famine.'[63]

'Two days later', Brabaud reported, 'the Arabs began to frequent our markets, bringing their cows and various other goods', which proved to the French that if you raided, you were able to able to assume economic control as you destroyed the ecological value of the land. A dichotomised picture of the world was presented whereby the Other's

suffering was paired with an abundance for the self, ambrosia with famine. 'Provisions', Brabaud wrote admiringly, 'of all sorts abounded in the camp, with barley being brought for the horses every day'. The contrast between a life in which the army struggled to feed its men and its animals and one in which provisions and 'les chevaux de soumission' were brought to its door was stark. No wonder that Brabaud concluded that 'these operations would soon end with the complete submission of the province'.

The relentlessness with which the troubles posed by the landscape, climate and people were conflated was suggestive of the manner in which the environmental explanation for particular kinds of French aggression in the Kabylie became wholly internalised. French soldiers came to believe that they were operating in a unique environment and interpreted every obstacle thrown in their path, be it a thunderstorm or the narrowness of a ravine, as proof of this observation. These were the sorties of which Ducuing wrote, 'After the campaign of 1841, the tribes of the plain and the valleys were reduced; but the mountain tribes had escaped our invasion in hiding behind their rocks.' [64]

On 18 July 1842, for instance, Colonel Lamarck wrote to the Governor General of a 'vigorous blow' he had struck against a tribe, 'which circumstances had rendered indispensable' (and which had, of course, the requisite 'great moral effect on the Arabs'). It transpired that the circumstances the officer mentions were the fact that these incidents took place 'in the middle of the mountains and an area of near inaccessible gorges'.[65] 'My position', he wrote to Bugeaud, 'was difficult for I found myself in the mountains, in gorges which were scarcely passable, yet it was necessary to impose ourselves on the Arabs, to show them the clarity of our message, and I did not hesitate [...] It was necessary to strike a decisive blow.'

The letters and 'journaux de marche' of French soldiers understandably placed great emphasis on the hardships and the difficulties entailed in such campaigning, yet there seemed no self-consciousness as to the questionable relationship between harsh weather conditions and the necessary severity of ensuing attacks upon the Kabyle tribes. Implied readers were, one supposes, encouraged to understand that complete forms of annihilation could be justified on the basis that no reasonable man would wish to return to such places.

A typical account of the hostility of such environments can be found in an 11 March 1843 letter to Baraguey d'Hilliers from one of his expeditionary leaders, who wrote that:

> The weather seemed favourable for our marching, yet suddenly the heavens opened, the direction of the wind changed and soon torrents of icy rain were pouring down, mixed with huge hailstones and snow, powerfully assailing our troops [...] the night which followed was awful [...] covered with a fog so deep that the men were scarcely able to see one another.[66]

Here it was the climate 'assailing' French troops, along with their hunger, which induced a sense in the men that they were operating in a malign milieu, yet it was only their human foes whom they would be able to challenge. That same spring, Bugeaud wrote to Soult of an attack mounted by Le Bar on this campaign in which the general had 'mounted a razzia against a village', in which 'our troops were fortunate in being able to shelter in the village for the rain fell torrentially through the night'.[67] Such conditions, along with the troops having no further need of shelter, then explained the events of the following morning when 'fires broke out in every direction' in which the local population were treated to 'severe, yet well-merited punishment'.

In a sense, the only difficulty with such forms of explanation was that they depended on some knowledge of the conditions which the armée d'Afrique endured in Algeria, which explains quite why these travails were essayed at such length in letters between the colony and the metropole. A classic example of such work came in a letter of 1842 from the Governor General to the Minister of War, which merits being quoted at length:

> I write, Monsieur le Maréchal of the great moral force which our successes have won us and the manner in which their effect will spread through the mountains. I suspect, though, that you could not conceive of the immense difficulties posed by such a mission. I will, therefore, seek to paint you a picture.
>
> It is more than probable that the Romans never submitted these lands, and that they possessed only a certain number of bases along the coast. The Arabs certainly never penetrated these places, whilst the Turks held only a nominal form of authority and were never able to raise taxes. On the contrary, they in fact paid a tribute to the Kabyles [...] Forty years ago Osman Pacha attempted to conquer these lands but his troop of 4000 men were exterminated. [...] Even Abd el-Kader has never set foot here and has not thought it worth trying to impose taxes here. He is venerated a great *marabout*, but he has never been able to impose his authority.

> Why have these fierce mountain-dwellers never been submitted?
>
> The answer is that they are extremely warlike and strong and that the topography of their land is even tougher than them.
>
> Without having seen some part of these mountains or similar ranges, as we have done, it is impossible to form an idea of the horrible difficulties they present. There are gorges wherever one looks, ravines of a terrifying depth, razor-sharp ridges, trails so narrow there is not room for even a single man to pass. For the indigènes, these amount to a series of impregnable redoubts, interrupted only by a scattering of valleys. In order to remove these people, we must move in with a series of columns, each of which must have sufficient strength so as not to be ambushed, for these people offer their neighbour moral succour. Often we would be able to offer no help to each other, and it was only in forcing the retreat of the enemy that we were able to make war on them in these maze-like labyrinths of rocks and steep-sided woods.
>
> We might also add that in summer and in autumn there is rarely enough water present to sustain a column. The Kabyles drink only when absolutely necessary, celebrating each source they find when the streams have run dry. By contrast, these rivers become thundering torrents over the winter months.
>
> You will see, therefore, Monsieur le Ministre, what a terrible affair this has become. These untamed mountain-dwellers are too independent and unyielding to take any notice of our victories against the Arabs. If the government wishes to operate here, it needs to make a sober judgement as to whether this would be useful and whether there is the opportunity to do so, assessing the difficulties entailed and the means by which victory might be achieved without causing dangers elsewhere.[68]

At this point Bugeaud therefore argued that the French should concentrate on taming the Kabyles in the Constantine–Philippeville–Bône triangle, leaving other tribes alone in the hope that they might trade with the French in the long-run. Yet even such a limited goal would prove impossible if the Minister was not willing to send more troops, and to then allow them to remain in the country, 'for having conquered, it would be necessary to keep hold of the land and that would take scarcely fewer troops than those necessary for the conquest'. Without such assistance, 'the war would never end'.[69]

Such were the special conditions of war in Kabylie in which an animalised foe needed to be hunted in the most extreme of

environments. If the French were to succeed where so many other powers had failed through history, they would need not just the true backing of their government but new forms of warfare in this land of privations and danger, this special 'warring environment' as Bugeaud called it.

Exterminatory razzias

The last example of a razzia centred on the destruction of a town is that of Bisson on Miliana in June 1842. This particular raid leads into the third sub-category of lifeworld razzias: those incursions which had massacres as one of their chief goals. Bisson was the commanding officer of Miliana but his own superior, Saint-Arnaud, who was no stranger to extremely forceful raiding, adjudged this particular attack – in which 'neither a single village or house escaped from the flames' – to be 'imprudent'.[70] It is unclear as to whether Saint-Arnaud's objections to the operation centred on the relatively high French casualty figures – for 43 soldiers were killed, which may well constitute the greatest single loss of French life in the course of a razzia – or whether Bisson's tactics in setting the villages ablaze were being criticised. We might intuit the latter, for the use of fire had increasingly become the mark of the most extreme and uncontrolled razzias, in which no real attempt was made to limit or quantify the scale of damage done to the tribes which were under attack; nor, in many cases, was any check placed on the bloodlust of ordinary soldiers who were allowed to commit any forms of degradation they chose. In the case of this particular incursion, 100 prisoners were taken, but the suspicion remains that the number of villagers who were summarily executed must have been of a much higher order.

The exterminatory aims and effects of other lifeworld razzias were much clearer. In the same month as Bisson's sorties, it was reported that eight recent razzias in the province of Algiers had generated more than 66,000 francs and that it was hoped that the French 'might profit from the anarchic situation' in the east of the Mitidja, where a number of tribes were increasingly receptive to French offers of alliances, where before they had proved hard to 'reduce'.[71] The verb 'réduire' here was one of a number of terms used by French commanders to specifically describe razzias and tactics which had as their goal the near or complete elimination of recalcitrant tribes. Such terms found an enthusiastic audience among ideologues, such as Pierre Christian, who in 1846 wrote that 'It is necessary to restart our razzia, to perpetuate the razzia: meaning, to exterminate in detail'.[72]

A second instance of the use of such language came in the reporting of the mission to secure the land around Orléansville and its communications with Ténès in June 1843, in which Changarnier was adjudged to have committed a 'terrible wrong' (un mal horrible) to the Kabyles to the east of l'Ouarsensis, in the manner in which he 'moved slowly amongst them, cutting down their trees and burning everything'.[73] If there appears to be slight euphemistic quality to the idea of not spelling out the nature of the wrong which Changarnier perpetrated, it perhaps becomes rather clearer in the idea that he slowly and systematically ensured that all was burned and destroyed, which quite evidently includes the people of the tribe as well as their buildings. It is quite typical of such accounts in the manner in which an injustice is admitted, a picture is painted of the manner in which burning villages constituted the site of such wrongs, but the Algerian, neither dead nor alive, stands as a marked and quite striking absence from such narratives (made all the more plain when, in the following chapter, we begin to see how the bodies of Algerians can be written into such stories).

This was equally apparent that same month in the province of Oran, where Bugeaud and his commanders had been incensed by the killing of their ally Mustapha ben Ismaël. 'Reprisals' were 'enjoined against the Flitta', who were adjudged to have been the guilty party, while Bugeaud 'gathered La Moricière and Bourjolly to plan operations against this tribe [opérer contre cette tribu]'.[74] More significantly Bugeaud was reported as having regretted that La Moricière had not received a letter in time in which he had ordered that the Hachem Gharaba tribe should be 'wiped from the face of the earth' ['rayer cette tribu de la carte']. This particular formulation of words seems interesting for three reasons: first, that it constitutes a clear order to systematically kill a whole tribe; second, that while it is more direct than most such orders, it still deploys metaphorical or euphemistic terms as a means of cloaking such behaviour; and, third, the words used here evoke the idea of the *tabula rasa* which so profoundly informed the dreamworld of men such as Bugeaud, for they fantasised that they should be able to operate on a blank canvas in Africa, rather than the troubling, populated world in which they actually functioned. The systematic character of this tactic was made apparent in Bugeaud's use of almost identical language in April of that year when he wrote that the French 'should try to wipe the Hachem from the map [effaçer de la carte] because we will never be able to trust them'.[75]

A third instance of an exterminatory lifeworld massacre is that of Gentil's razzia on the Beni Zeroual, also in March 1843. Unlike many

such forays of this particular type, detailed casualty statistics were recorded, which revealed that 150 locals were killed, 712 prisoners captured, along with 400 cattle and 3000 sheep, while 11 French troops were killed and 18 injured. Such casualty figures lie broadly in line with what we would expect from such raids, in which tribal losses were around ten times greater than those of the French. The relative death rates apparent here were slightly more disproportionately heavy in the case of the Beni Zeroual, but not strikingly so. What was truly arresting, however, in French reports of the event was an additional anonymous note that 'rumour had it that 600 of the tribe were killed or fatally wounded'. If this were true, and it is intriguing that anyone should choose to contradict an official military account on the very page which it was recorded, it might suggest that either Gentil or his superiors were in the habit of altering casualty statistics so that razzias had the appearance of battles rather than exterminatory massacres.

This also raises the question as to why Bugeaud and his allies were in any way reticent in their recording of local casualties, for there was something of a disjuncture between their enthusiastic advocacy for massacres and their lack of willingness to concede that they had followed through on their intentions in their numerical reckoning of Algerian deaths. After all, in this particular razzia, Gentil had boasted that he had 'ravaged everything in my path', which would seem to imply the strategic deployment of the most intemperate forms of violence, rather than the more nuanced battling and capture of prisoners which was suggested by the official statistical record of the engagement.

Part of the explanation for this mix of frankness and disingenuousness lies in the uses to which such reports were put. If there was a chance that the wider public, and the press in particular, should learn of the specific atrocities committed by French troops, their generals in Africa understood that it would be better to draw something of a veil over such details. This was quite apparent in the following remarks made by Soult on the campaigns of the winter of 1843:

> Already these last events have been overblown to a quite ridiculous degree by the fearful and the malicious. Newspapers, even those of the government, are calling for a return to 'restrained occupation', alleging that we are pursuing a chimera and that our supposed successes are no more than illusions.[76]

The especially compelling aspect of this statement was its coming from Soult, rather than Bugeaud or one of his generals. It reveals the manner

in which Soult ultimately supported the policy of the razzia, vehemently opposing the legalist 'occupation restreinte', and the way in which he sought to 'cover' Bugeaud, while fretting about the management of information. The Minister well understood that support for the army in Africa and the great expense this entailed would wane if the narrative of the conquest was dominated by accounts of massacres. Yet, as we shall see in the following chapter, however much the French army might have sought to exclude the grim details of annihilatory massacres from their official documentation, there were times when the grisly fabric of such work nonetheless seeped onto the page.

Soult's views were equally plain in a similar letter written to Bugeaud just weeks later.[77] There he reflected on the news that a series of the Kabyles tribes had 'received very severe punishment', asserting that:

> It is to be hoped that we will profit from such actions, even with those who have been recalcitrant till now. It is of course always regrettable that we have to move to such a cruel extreme in burning great numbers of villages, including that which the Kabyles call Haimda, as well as destroying at least 20,000 fruit trees. Since such terrible work preserves our own future, let us hope that similar forms of devastation will not always need to be inflicted upon those who make our following such paths inevitable!

6
A Future Painted in Sombre Colours

The Beni Menacer

In order to truly understand the ways in which French razzias functioned, the manner in which they were directed and their effects upon Indigènes, it is necessary to look at specific, and quite typical, campaigning moments in greater detail. We are then able to gain a richer sense of the ways in which razzias were the product of dialogues and decision-making between the office of the Governor General, commanders in the field and the Ministry of War in Paris (with the possibility of assigning some sense of accountability among these parties who, individually, were wont to absolve themselves of responsibility for the most horrific features of such raids). Closer investigation of the extensive sets of documentation on such attacks offers not only a greater sense of the ways in which razzias functioned but also the opportunity to see the manner in which more programmatic features of French campaigning were stitched across military interventions which were invariably described as reactions to specific circumstances and as being quite unprogrammatic in their character.

The first campaign to be considered was that enjoined by a French column which left Algiers on 29 March 1842 for a season's campaigning in the Kabyle, chiefly directed at the Beni Menacer.[1] Their first engagement was a 'great battle at the Zaouia of Berkani' in which 'the Kabyles fired at us, whilst we got on with our burning'.[2] The fighting must indeed have been fierce for four French soldiers were killed, with an equal number injured. The army, however, captured a number of women, with whom they sent a message from Bugeaud to the Beni Menacer:

> It is not us who have begun this war in which you find yourselves, but Abdelkader and his lieutenants; submit to us and we will do you no

> harm [...] but will protect you. You need to understand that we have the ability to travel wherever we wish in your mountains. If you do not submit, I will return when your wheat is ripe and will not leave you a single stalk. You should count on no peace until you submit.[3]

The absolutism of this offer and its consequential logic – in which death came to those who spurned peace – was quite plain. Two days later, colonel Friand's account for the Ministry of the day's campaigning could be taken as a summation of the standard narrativisation of such warfare, for his short text began with a complaint as to the 'extremely difficult' path on which they had travelled towards Cherchell, moving on to a French ambush in which 'ten or so Arabs were seized and bayoneted', followed by a note that 'the column burned everything on their way', disdain for the 'decadence' of their foes, an addendum regarding the 'extremely violent' wind that night and a tragic coda in which 'an artilleryman who became detached from his column, was discovered beheaded'.[4] In such an environment, the unspecified consequences of the great burning which the battalion had undertaken were quite unremarkable and, tellingly of course, merited no specifics as compared with the brutal fate of a single French casualty.

Using typically coded language, Bugeaud then wrote to Changarnier, who led the expedition, to direct him to undertake a 'task' which was described as being 'difficult and painful, but nonetheless glorious', indicative of a form of organised bloodiness which had no need of being spelled out in detail.[5] The success of such operations was made quite plain in an approving note just days later in which it was reported that:

> The Beni Menacer are distraught following the burning of their villages. The cold and the rain have killed many women and children, their herds are in a pitiful state, they see their lands occupied, they fear for their harvests and their fruit trees. In a word, their hopes and future would seem to be painted in sombre colours.[6]

Here we see the enthusiastic merging of the lifeworld and the exterminatory razzias, in which a form of absolution for the deaths of the weakest members of the tribe was provided by the weather and environment which so travailed the French themselves.

Meanwhile, the destruction of the Zaouia of El-Berkani was, quite typically, reported to have 'produced a great moral effect on the Kabyles', not least since 'in their fanaticism, they had believed the site to be divinely protected, believing that no Christian would ever reach it'.[7]

A captured tribesman, Mohammed ben Sabbaraouj, also contended that dissent had broken out among the tribe because the house of one local leader, Sidi Malek Sabbarouj, had been spared in the attack, leading some to allege that he was collaborating with the French (knowledge which the French writer noted might be exploited in the future). The armée also obtained a note from the Merkani urging the Beni Menacer to fight the invaders, arguing that the Merkani had paid protection taxes and provided their young men as soldiers, while the French 'lie right before you, pillaging us, burning us, reducing us to misery and causing our families to die in the snow'.[8]

The sights of such routine brutality led Bugeaud to write a letter of justification to the Ministry, in which he set out (seemingly for himself as well as Soult) what were claimed to be remarkable circumstances in the case of the Beni Menacer:

> Once again I decided to attempt to penetrate to the heartland of the Beni Menacer, in the hope of forcing them to attack me so as to prevent the burning of the many villages of the quite exceptional country described in this report.[9]

This account began, therefore, by describing razzias which had as their goal the military objectives of the very first such attacks in the 1830s, but which displayed their evolutionary quality in the manner in which they moved towards more exterminatory forms. Tellingly, for Bugeaud, agency was shared by the French and Algerians in such situations, for he wrote as though it were the tribe's decision as to whether or not their villages should be burned. If only the Beni Menacer had been able to understand not just the French, with their message of communicative violence, but the character of the 'Indigène' in the internal monologue of the French colonial mind, then they might have been spared the grossest excesses which would otherwise quite inevitably fall upon them.

However, the difficulty Bugeaud encountered was that it was hard to find the people or their herds, many of whom had fled into the mountains, so where possible he judged it 'more effective to do them harm in destroying their villages before their eyes'. This 'appalling' 'work of destruction', Bugeaud adjudged, 'Is undoubtedly cruel and it pains my heart, but there are simply no other means of conquering these extraordinary people.' 'France', Bugeaud wrote, as he sought to share the blame for acts he had directed, 'needed to understand that this was an inevitable consequence of what she wanted, for one could

not fight a war without aiming for such results, and these in turn could only be obtained by such harsh means'. Bugeaud's one form of moral consolation was that 'so as to offer some relief from these brutal necessities, we treated those women, children and the elderly' who remained in the villages with 'the greatest humanity', a claim belied by the quite frequent French approval of the demise of precisely such groups in despatches from this campaign. Indeed, the specific ways in which such groups were targeted were set out quite clearly by one officer:

> In a . . . letter you asked me what happens to the Algerian women we capture; some we keep as hostages and the rest are auctioned to the troops like animals . . . In the operations we have carried out during the last four months I have witnessed scenes that would melt the hardest of heart if one had time to let them! I witnessed it all with a frightening indifference. Kill all men over the age of fifteen [. . .] We kill, we slaughter; the screaming of the terror-stricken, the dying, blend with the noise of the beasts which roar and groan from all sides; it is hell, where instead of fire that burns us, snow floods us.[10]

In his dialogue with the Ministry, Bugeaud quite understandably sought to claim that the horrors inflicted on the Beni Menacer were justifiable for the reason that they had helped to achieve a broader strategic goal. 'The information we have received', he wrote, 'suggests that this incursion has induced a sense of terror in all the Kabyle tribes because it has shown that we can go wherever we want and that they in turn will face the same fate as the Menacer, who are the largest and most bellicose of the tribes.'[11] Violence as a form of conversation with the Beni Menacer was also therefore successful as a mode of discoursing with the Kabyles as a people.

This communicative purpose was stressed in Bugeaud's conclusion that he sought to augment this moral effect by distributing a series of proclamations to the tribes in which he said to them: 'while I now confine myself to burning your villages and to destroying your roads, once your harvests are ready, know that I will come to destroy them and to cut down your fig and olive trees'.

Days later, Bugeaud was informed that the king was unhappy with the conduct of war in Africa, but the reality of the Algerian theatre was that such declamations from Paris were purely ritual in their character.[12] That much was made plain in Bugeaud's description of a razzia to Soult on 18 April, in which he described:

> Enacting upon the Hadjoutes a razzia which caused them to lose more or less 150 men, women and children, a few cattle and a quantity of booty. The larger herds had fled before our arrival, but fifty or sixty of the fighters of the Kalifat Linbarrak were found in the woods by our infantry, who shot them through the thick woods [...] such that this fierce enemy were extinguished.[13]

Here again we see the manner in which the deaths of large numbers of civilians are casually embedded in the midst of a text which is chiefly focused on plunder. Its language is typically evasive in the way in which it indirectly blames the razzia itself, rather than Bugeaud or his troops, for these losses of life. Tellingly, the soldiers of Linbarrak are described with finality as having been 'extinguished', while all this was recounted in a communiqué to a superior with whom one conventionally acted out a game in which both parties insisted that adherence to certain rules of war was paramount.

Soult's true position was made quite plain in a justificatory letter he wrote to Bugeaud which, like so many such documents in the military files, seemed to attempt to rationalise the violence of the razzia on behalf of the Governor General, his troops, the Ministry and France more generally:

> You have been at work amongst the tribes of the Beni Menacer, where many villages have been ransacked or burned. These were wholly just reprisals to punish them for the incessant war which they have joined against us. I can therefore only applaud the humanitarian sentiments which led you to treat their women, children and elderly, who were not able to flee, with generosity, including the dispensation of food and even clothes. In acting thus, the horrors of war are seen to diminish and sentiments which will help our cause fill the minds of the population.[14]

Yet, as we have seen, in that very week the 'horrors of war' had included the killing of precisely those groups on whose protection Soult staked the case for humanitarian occupation. Interestingly, as Soult sought to rationalise France's behaviour in this conflict, the very fabric of his justificatory text betrayed a certain anxiety as to the means by which such behaviour could be explained, for his assertion that such people needed to be punished for 'the incessant war they had joined against us' replaced an earlier suggestion, struck-through on the page, that it was simply 'a war which they had declared'. Was Soult's hesitancy here, we

might ask, reflective of his own doubting of the original claim that this was a war of the tribe's making? Other letters from the period indicate that the Minister was in fact placing great pressure on generals such as Lamoricière and Bugeaud to ensure the complete submission of groups such as the Hachem and the Flitta, writing to the Governor General on 20 April 1842, 'I repeat, I await news of much more decisive successes'.[15]

Even by the standards of Algeria, the attacks on the Beni Menacer were acknowledged to be of a special viciousness. To take one example, on 10 June the chief of the Third Battalion at Miliana wrote to the Governor General to describe a razzia he had undertaken against the tribe three days before, speaking of 'the details of combat being more vicious than any I had seen in my thirteen years in Africa'.[16] He admitted that three leagues of land had been 'ravaged by my troops', while 'not a single village or even a single house had escaped from the flames', a level of specificity – albeit without the figuring of any Algerians or their bodies – relatively rare in this usually more allusive genre. More typically, these horrors were offset by the looting of 'an immense booty', which included 6000 cows, 12,000 sheep and much else besides.

There then followed characteristic accounts of the clear message which this assault sent to other tribes, again with a tone which combined metaphor with a rare figuring of the corpses of France's victims, as the commander described the way in which 'the road was filled to overflowing with the cadavers of Kabyles' which, as ever, 'induced a great moral effect'. [17] Moreover, 'the noise from this attack echoed around the country', such that the leaders of the Beni Zoug were moved to put 2000 men at the disposition of the French (so long as they would combine forces to attack a mutual enemy).

Reports from later in the summer of 1842 made it plain that all actors agreed that a normalisation of these special levels of violence was wholly justified in the case of the Beni Menacer, and it became quite plain that a consensus had been reached to utterly eliminate this constellation of recalcitrant tribes. On 16 June, Changarnier wrote to Bugeaud that 'If the Beni Menacer continue to be hostile, I shall be forced to help General Le Bar in reducing them.'[18] Four days later the commander of the First Division reported to Bugeaud that the battles with the tribe had been 'one of the most murderous struggles we have had in all Algeria', a source of some pride as such tussles were described as 'This brilliant and bloody affair'. The notion that such operations generated a clean slate on which the French might chalk up a new future for the country was quite apparent in Bugeaud's words to Baraguey d'Hilliers, when he wrote that 'As for us, my dear General, our horizon now lies clear, for we

have punished all of the rebel tribes who lay at our door, most especially the Beni Menacer'.[19]

Yet, as tended to be the case in such eliminatory assaults, it was quite clear that only certain portions of the tribe had initially been wiped out in these encounters. This was made plain in reports from the following year, when, in February 1843, Colonel Revu wrote that 'we must impose on the Beni Menacer the punishment they so richly deserve, in cutting down their trees and burning their homes'.[20] Soult was very much of the same accord, writing to Bugeaud that 'I've learned the painful lesson that in order to punish them, one must move against them with the most excessive rigour, for one recognizes that at times such examples are necessary, such that the indigenous population should not think that it might act with impunity.'[21] The completist aspiration of this logic was apparent in the Duc of Orléans's note to Bugeaud that month, in which he wrote that the Governor General would soon achieve, through General Le Bar's campaigns, 'that which you started so well with the Beni Menacer'.[22]

Later that same month, the Governor General wrote to the Minister to report on Le Bar's campaign against the Beni Menacer and the rebellious tribes to the west of Cherchell, using a language of energy which conveyed quite clearly the determination which underlay the final offensive against the tribe, recounting the way in which Le Bar's 'vigour and persistence had effected a solution. The five battalions he commanded had acted with great energy, both in combat and in coping with the tiredness and the terrible weather which had been almost incessant.'[23]

The eradication of the Beni Menacer was exemplary in the sense in which it revealed the essential complicity which drove French decision-making in the razzia. While letters, parliamentary speeches and newspaper articles might conjure up a picture in which events in Algeria were determined by debates between camps of legalists and proponents of violence, the detailed fabric of specific campaigns revealed that such discussions had no meaning in the practical business of entrenching French power. Supposed proponents of legalism, such as Soult, turned out to be as eager in their advocacy of communicative violence as men such as Bugeaud, with commanders on the ground operating with a quite clear sense of there being a unity of purpose in the chain of command from Paris to the mountains of the Kabylie.

That unity was directed towards a 'solution' to the intractable problem posed by the Beni Menacer while they lived and became explicitly directed towards the goal of their complete reduction. The desirability of this end emerged in part through the development of the playing

out of a dialogue in the French colonial mind in which supposedly humanitarian actions, such as the protection of women and children in attacks on villages, evidently inspired no sense of gratitude or loyalty among defeated members of the tribe. While Soult initially seemed sure that the 'sentiments which will help our cause fill the minds of the population', the continued resistance of the Indigènes essentially proved that they scarcely deserved to be seen to belong to the human family.

These ideas were strange ones in a number of ways, for they imputed to the Algerian an innate sense of viewing violence as being symbolic rather than more understandably mourning the deaths of relatives, neighbours, villages. The Indigène, in the French imagination, comprehended that the French had come to speak their own supposed language of communicative violence, and ought therefore to have reacted in the ways in which French readings of their environment predicted. Instead there was only miscommunication, for the French could not countenance the idea that they had mistranslated the meaning of violence in local cultures and that it was not perhaps possessed of the unique and specific communicative power they believed.

Such toing and froing in the mind might not have mattered overly were it not used as a central component in the argument that the French had gained a moral, as well as a military, right to exterminate noncompliant tribes. Nonetheless it was not the case that such twisted logics were always needed to justify the actions of the French army, for while Soult and others sometimes relied on what seemed to be the ethical force of such argumentation, at other moments they more bluntly accepted that civilians were necessary targets in a campaign as trying as that of the Kabylie.

Pacifying the Erdough and the death of Zerdoud

The French obsession with both thinking about and practising violence was equally apparent in the months of March and April 1843. Central to this drama was Baraguey d'Hilliers, General of the Constantine Division, who found himself chastised by the Minister for the manner in which he had behaved following the killing of the 'fanatic Zerdoud', leader of the Erdough. On discovering that Zerdoud had been beheaded and his skull placed atop a stake outside Baraguey d'Hillier's camp, Soult marshalled a quite familiar legalist denunciation of such practices, writing that 'for quite some time I have repudiated such forms of mutilation which are inhumane, irreligious and contrary to our morals'.[24]

This was also the moment at which Baraguey d'Hilliers and Senilhes launched a razzia against the Erdough, in which they captured cattle and imposed 'a terrible lesson' on the tribe which the commanders were sure 'would place them morally at our discretion [les a mises moralement à notre discretion] '.[25] This particular phrasing is hard to capture in English, but what seems to have been meant was that having endured the terrible violence of the French, the Erdough would now feel obliged to support the occupation forces, for if they did not do so, they would know that the few of the tribe who remained would be slaughtered. The positive, strategic effect of this attack was that Bugeaud now believed that convoys would no longer need escorts as they travelled between Philippeville and Constantine, though Baraguey d'Hilliers believed the western side of this route to be insufficiently pacified so as to be able to take such a risk.

In a sense legalist protestations in cases such as that of Zerdoud were not of any great consequence, for we know that Soult said one thing and did another, and that he was often concerned with 'covering' his position in the face of opposition in the Chamber and the press which was fomented when news of such atrocities leaked into the French public domain. Yet the Minister's disavowal of the inhumane and immoral qualities of some forms of violence does merit consideration precisely because it established the (admittedly quite informal) ways in which French authorities operated with a sense that there was an ethics of war which ought to be considered in Africa.

Moving back one week, Baraguey d'Hilliers had reported at length on the Erdough campaign to the Governor General, making it quite plain that as well as killing Zerdoud his mission had been predicated on the idea of eliminating much of the tribe. As the commander began, 'In sending Colonel Senhiles to follow the ridges of the Erdough, my idea was to drive the populations towards the west, so as to then march on them with three columns so as to corner them against the sea'.[26] Typically this decision was in part motivated by the hostility of the Algerian environment:

> Since the weather was menacing us and it was impossible to operate in the mountains after rain, there was not a moment to lose, not least since a number of tribes had made offers of submission which could quickly turn into hostilities if we delayed matters. I therefore resolved to act and the column penetrated the territory of the Erdough [...] driving the population towards the Akeïcha Gorge. This manoeuvre proved a great success for the Kabyles fled in every

> direction, abandoning their herds and retreating to the coastline and the marabout of Sidi à Keïcha. For one moment we thought they would surrender, but they soon began to fight to the point until the last of their number expired. Our own losses in this engagement were slight.[27]

Needing to read only lightly between the lines here, such trivial French casualties were of course the result of their combating a largely civilian population, being driven into and towards the sea in a reversal of the traditional fears of European sailors on the Barbary Coast. Such 'extirpation', to use the French term popular at this time, also incorporated some 'burning' in the marabout of Aboubeck, as was casually noted by the writer.

Overall the mission was judged a great success, for all of the troublesome tribes in the region were now sure 'to come to submit', having seen the 'ruin' wrought upon the peoples of the Erdough. As for the mutilated head of Zerdoud, Baraguey d'Hilliers thought it important that it be 'shown to the Arabs' faces' so as that it might speak its message clearly. After all 'in the north', Zerdoud had been 'the guiding force behind all the insurrections and attacks against the French, for on hearing his powerful voice the tribes marched against us. In Constantine he aspired to play the role which Abd el Kader performed in the province of Algiers.' Such talk of drama should have alerted both writer and reader to the unrealistic investment which was placed in individuals in such narrativisations of the struggles the French faced in Algeria, yet how much easier was it to believe that the source of the opposition they faced originated in the fanaticism of a few rogue chieftains than the general hostility of an invaded populus?

Such ideological readings of events were anyhow supplemented by further descriptions of the clearer strategic gains which seemed to ensue from such assaults. In this case, 'the two expeditions which we have completed so very quickly now ensured a state of perfect peace in the vast triangle between Philippeville, Bône and Constantine, whilst also delivering more than one hundred thousand francs worth of cattle and mules for the State reserves'.[28]

Interestingly the correspondence pertaining to this campaign also included a series of letters between Baraguey d'Hilliers and Soult, in which the former complained that any criticism of his conduct in Algeria would be better directed towards the office of the Governor General. Firstly, the commander of Constantine resented any ministerial censure for he 'thought that the complete success of his

expeditions against the Zerdeza and the Erdough served to justify them', while the charge that he had in some sense 'gone against the Governor General's instructions' was belied by the fact that he was able to cite a letter from Bugeaud in which the Governor General had proclaimed 'it is time that the Kabyles felt the full force of our arms'.[29] In Baraguey d'Hillier's mind, this assertion evidently shielded him from responsibility for having committed atrocities, for although they might be subjected to legalist denunciation by the Minister, they were quite clearly the outcome of the overarching French strategy in Algeria.

In other instances such discussions of responsibility, duty and guilt were seen as quite unnecessary, as was plain in a letter between these same correspondents just weeks later. In this second missive, Baraguey d'Hilliers admitted that Soult's criticisms of razzias undertaken by local allies of the French were 'just', before moving on to complain that a tribe (the Harata) 'could not truly be said to pacified' in spite of the fact that Baraguey d'Hilliers had killed their leader and 'punished them severely'.[30] This harsh treatment was almost certainly of precisely the same character as that violence which the letter began admitting was in some ways beyond the pale, yet in this instance Baraguey d'Hilliers complained to the minister that he was 'despairing' that he had not been able to finish this work because Bugeaud would not send him a battalion of scouts for this purpose. In other words, while the general would at one moment write to the ministry that the horrors of the Algerian war should be lain at the door of the Governor General, on another day he would castigate his superior to Soult for his failure to provide him with the men to complete such work. Such was the fluid moral world of the Algerian colony.

This same campaign also saw the French resort to smoking a Kabyle tribe from a series of caverns, a tactic familiar from the celebrated cases of the massacre of the El Ouffia in 1832 and the Ouled Riah in 1845. The very awfulness of those massacres and the public excoriation of the French Army in the metropole have tended to see them viewed as atrocious outliers in the history of the early colony, yet to a student of French campaigning they seem relatively typical and nondescript. This was certainly the case in 1843, when Bugeaud reported on General Gentil's struggle against the Beni Zeroual.[31]

Following a fairly well-worn narrative, Gentil arrived to pacify the tribe only to discover 'the territory abandoned', though he instinctively suspected that they had retreated to 'the famous caves from which the Turks had never been able to force them'. Rather unusually in this

instance it was claimed that 200 of the Kabyles had then sprung from their hideouts to attack the French party, though since there was but a single injury among the raiding party, this seems less than credible. What was certain was that Gentil imposed 'the most harm that they he could' ('le plus de mal possible'), which would seem to be a coded reference to the burning or asphyxiation of the villagers, as well as 'burning their houses and destroying all that could provide them with sustenance in their orchards and gardens'. Such a lifeworld razzia was justified on the grounds that the tribe had previously reneged on their surrender on a number of occasions, while it was also believed that Abd el-Kader had recently stayed with them.

As was always the case, Bugeaud was sure that this action 'had produced positive results' for the remaining half of the tribe which had survived submitted to the French, though the Governor General did not reflect on the evident fragility of such pacting with the Beni Zeroual. Days later Gentil successfully prosecuted a further razzia against the Amemeras, which was reported in fairly unremarkable details other than the fact that Bugeaud noted that the general had been forced to 'kill a number of men who had been aiding the flight of the tribespeople' ['la fuite des populations'], which stands out as a very rare instance of such civilians being described in French reporting, or being figured as a distinct group in themselves (as opposed to simply being constituted as a tribe, Kabyles or Arabs). The subtext of the report was evidently its suggestion that such populations should not escape the pursuit of the French army.

Soult's wishing to hold to both a pragmatic acceptance of extreme violence and a squeamish legalism was again made plain days later when the Ministry offered a report on these actions of the Governor General.[32] Mention was made of an attack on Abd el-Kader's forces undertaken by Cheik el Arab, a French ally, in which the latter had 'fought him, killing his men as well as capturing his flag, and having sent us twenty-six pairs of ears'. As Soult remarked, 'this could but have a positive effect' on France's foes, 'but it would be better if such profanities were not repeated'. As we have seen in similar cases, the vividness of these severed ears evidently caused Soult to think hard about such violence and how his reaction to it should be characterised, revealed by an alternate text in pencil being hesitatingly inserted above the first draft, reading 'the success of our auxiliaries should not be determined by such acts of cruelty which can only be described as profanities'. Yet, even in spite of such objections, the central point which Soult made to Bugeaud was that this had been a useful exercise.

That same week a similar form of what we might call post-legalist explanatory logic was to be deployed by the Procureur du Roi at Philippeville in a letter authorising Baraguey d'Hilliers to attack a series of tribes outside the town.[33] 'The town', he explained, 'has been in a state of agitation for more than two months' for 'a week would not pass without Arabs coming into the town to attack or to pillage'. One incident in particular preyed on his mind, in which a Kabyle, supported by Arabs who lived in Philippeville, had snuck into town to commit 'all kind of atrocities'. Importantly, the Kabyles behind this attack 'were known' and the prosecutor supplied the general with a list of tribes who merited punishment. 'As always, the French flag would be victorious and the tribes would come to submission', though 'these men could not be treated according to the laws of war'. 'They were', after all, 'not enemies but brigands who had come onto our territory so as to commit crimes against people and property.' The post-legalist position therefore ascribed no difference between the individual actor or perpetrator and the people from whence they came, convinced indeed that the punishment of the group had become a necessity in this environment.

Dawson Borrer

While it is generally the case that the specificities of French violence in early colonial Algeria can only be known through the documentary records left by those who perpetrated such acts, there do exist a small number of more independent witnesses to the culture of the razzia. Chief among such external observers was the British traveller and writer Dawson Borrer. The special value of Borrer's *Narrative of a Campaign against the Kabailes of Algeria* was that it was based upon his own eyewitness testimony, secured after he had persuaded Bugeaud that he should be able to accompany a French expeditionary force into the Kabylie in 1847.[34] Borrer's work offers a powerful form of corroboration of the specific horrors of the razzia sketched in the army's own documents, with a level of rich detail considered inappropriate or impolitic in most official recording of such events. As importantly, the book contains as much thinking about violence as it does descriptions of brutal raids and, as such, it offers something of a compilation of the explanatory logics deployed by the French in Algeria.

There is no doubt that special care should be taken in reading Borrer's accounts of the atrocities he observed, chiefly because one might assume some 'national' motive to his contrasting French barbarity with British humanity, but there is also a need to recognise that Borrer was generally

sympathetic both to France's military aims and the means by which she achieved such goals. For although, as he said, the 'French in Africa have frequently been declared guilty, by the great tribunal of the world, of unwarrantable barbarities', he noted that such behaviour could also be found in the British empire and among victors more generally ('History proves that from the earliest ages of the world to the present time the "*God of armies*" has ordained that the progress of nations should be traced in blood').[35] It is also important to note that Borrer's claims were backed up by the private remarks of soldiers in Algeria, such as General Le Flô, who confided that 'after razzia, it was far from rare to see soldiers throw children to their comrades, who they would catch upon the sharp points of their bayonets, whilst they would also rip off women's earrings, the ears included, and cut off their fingers for their rings'.[36]

Borrer was certainly critical of the strategic imperatives which drove the campaigns of 1847, contending that the French would have done well to learn lessons from history in more cautiously drawing the Kabyles into a commercial empire, rather than challenging a famously intractable race. He also questioned the immediacy of the need to establish new lines of communication between Algiers, Sétif and Bougie, which he felt served little purpose at that moment of the conquest (while Borrer may have been correct on this last point, there is no doubt that he fundamentally misunderstood Bugeaud's strategy in this regard, which combined a desire for the establishment of a coherent infrastructure with the opportunities it offered for the elimination of obstinate tribes).[37]

Borrer was also imbued with a form of racial hatred towards the Kabyles quite typical of those with whom he travelled, speaking of:

> The abominable vices and debaucheries of the Kabyle race, the inhuman barbarities they are continually guilty of towards such as may be cast by tempest or other misfortune upon their rugged shores, the atrocious cruelties and refined tortures they, in common with the Arab, delight in exercising upon any such enemies as may be so unhappy to fall into their hands, must render the hearts of those acquainted with this people perfectly callous as to what misfortunes may befall them or their country.[38]

Such views were of course simply a summary of the traditional tropes of European writing on Barbary, from the stress on the Africans' delight in cruelty, the terrible fears which filled Europeans' minds once they arrived in the Maghreb, the especial risk posed to shipwrecked sailors

(an eighteenth-century fear transposed to the middle of the nineteenth century) and their 'inhuman' behaviour necessarily relegating them to a subhuman position in a comparison of races. Later, in reporting on the capture of three soldiers from the division, Borrer was forced to admit that the tales the French told about the fate such men endured were sometimes simply yarns which drew on such stocks of anecdotes about the cruelty of Africans:

> It was said, that, from one of the outposts, in the evening, the Kabailes were seen busily engaged in roasting their victims before a large fire upon a neighbouring slope; but whether this was a fact or not I never learnt. That the Arabs and Kabailes have often committed this atrocity with their French prisoners is true enough. But there were so many accomplished *blageurs*, or tellers of white lies, attached to the column, that it was often difficult to distinguish truth from falsehood.[39]

While the Kabyle might be viewed as inhuman or subhuman, he was also tellingly described as inhabiting a form of quasi- or crypto-human persona, for while such people were '*apparently* inoffensive',[40] the reality was that that their true character only emerged once one's back was turned:

> Because the wily Kabyle often conceals his arms at hand in the brushwood, and, taking up his reaping-hook, or entering into conversation, appears the very type of innocence and simplicity: but as soon as the rear-guard passes on he hastily resumes his weapons; and if no decided attack is made in union with his brothers in arms, why he will at all events yield himself the satisfaction to throw in, from behind the brushwood or rocks, a few parting bullets, laughing in his sleeve at those who, their 'eyes blinded by Allah', did not take advantage of his presence and affability to cut off his head.[41]

A form of total warfare, or counterinsurgency, was therefore wholly appropriate in such a theatre of war, for it was the Kabyles who encouraged the French to erase any kinds of distinctions between civilians and combatants. The language the Kabyle spoke was one of violence and he expected aggression as a form of communication, so the European was naïve if he did not adapt to this new environment. Deep down, in his true persona, the Algerian was driven by a religious hatred which not

only liked to see all Europeans purged from Africa but also proposed personal gains as a reward for hastening such an end:

> And then again he smiles as, rushing out from the foot-sore and weary straggler from the column, he passes his hideous knife along his victim's throat, and with a solemn measured step regains his gourbie, joyful at heart; for has he not assuredly gained an extra houri in Paradise by slaying another 'Roumi dog'?[42]

Reading such words should give us cause to reflect on the special value of Borrer's writing, for there is no doubt that he learned, and internalised, such views from the armée d'Afrique with whom he travelled and, as such, Borrer offers a privileged access into the French colonial mind. More particularly, Borrer adopted a typical mode of thinking about Algerians in which Europeans dramatised the stories of their foes as they imagined the ways in which the African thought about the European invaders. In some ways it is hard to understate quite how important such melodramatic fantasies were in the construction of relations between the French and the Kabyles, for the behaviour of Bugeaud's men was in some sense determined by the moral lessons which they drew from their narrativisations of the lives of their interlocutors (which they forgot had been their own creation).

Borrer recognised that in the light of such innate and irredeemable animality:

> Many may be led to think that, as far as the advancement of civilization is concerned, the wiping off of the Kabyle and Arab races of Northern Africa from the face of the earth would be the greatest boon to humanity.[43]

The extermination of a people made sense in this quasi-scientific and profoundly textual argument, based upon the inborn cruelty of the Kabyle, while it was also a moral good. The 'Many' referred to here are evidently the French who, Borrer understood, risked losing their own sense of humanity and their position at the apex of civilisation if they began to mimic the culture of 'sanguinary atrocities' of the Kabyles:

> Though, however, they may be fraught with all the vices of the Canaanitish tribes of old, yet the command 'Go ye after him through the city and smite; let not your eyes spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children and women,' is

> not justifiably issued at the pleasure of man; and we can but lament to see a great and gallant nation engaged in a warfare exasperating both parties to indulge in sanguinary atrocities; – atrocities to be attributed on one side to the barbarous and savage state of those having recourse to them, but on the other proceeding only from a thirst for retaliation and bloody revenge, unworthy of those enjoying a high position as a civilized people.[44]

Borrer also reported on the more general Janus-like character of a campaign which the French government described as being 'of a peaceful character', yet which was led by a man who pronounced that 'the submission of the indigènes is never certain until gunpowder has spoken' (it is hard to imagine a more evocative expression of the idea of the communicative qualities of violence than this contention of Bugeaud's).[45]

More specifically Borrer described at great length the manner in which the burning of towns was enjoined, detailing the baroque qualities of the French razzia which lay implied or undescribed in the letters and documents of the armée d'Afrique. What seems even more remarkable was Borrer's claim that his account of these events – which are unique in their graphic horror – was an edited and sanitised version of that which he had seen, for 'Scenes indeed took place, during that affair, even far more abominable than any here related; neither are they kept back from any feeling of delicacy with regard to my French friends ("rien n'est beau que le vrai") but merely because the relation of them might prove offensive to the generality of readers.'[46]

In the most emblematic of Borrer's reports, the French had arrived in a settlement of the Beni Abbès in the summer of 1847, in which property was stolen, civilians killed and the town was destroyed as giant containers of oil were pricked with bayonets and then set alight.[47] He adjudged such 'massacring, burning and plundering' to be commonplace on French raids,[48] with no distinctions made between combatants and civilians. On one occasion, Borrer reported that he had attempted to hide a young girl in order to help her evade the French troops, but her refuge was then burnt, 'The unfortunate Kabyle child was doubtless consumed with her aged parent. How many others have shared her fate!'.[49] Similarly, 'Some Israeilitish artizans, workers in silver and in iron, trusting to their black turbans and their unwarlike character for mercy, fled not upon the taking of the village. It was a false confidence; for the soldiers, neither distinguishing nor wishing to distinguish them from Moslems, fell upon and slew them.'[50]

Even when distinctions were notionally made between those who were to be executed and those who might be saved, these were of little practical import, for:

> From the blazing village close to which this halt took place, a Kabyle, driven forth from some hiding-place by the flames, fell into the hands of the soldiers. Dragging the trembling wretch along, they pricked and threatened him with their swords; then forcing him down upon the stump of an olive-tree, they were upon the point of cutting off his head; but an officer interfering, he was led before the Marshal; and the chief, El Mokrani, proving him, by the hair upon his head, to be a mere Jewish artisan, it was said that he was released; though from the manner in which he was led away, surrounded by tormentors thirsting for his blood, it is more probable that he found his liberty in death.[51]

Such an incident might stand in as a motif for the larger French culture of violence in Algeria, for although there was some sense that rules and restraint were imposed on soldiers in the field, the reality was that war crimes were an important feature of the army's repertoire. While the bloodlust of ordinary soldiers was tempered to a degree by their officers, Bugeaud and the most senior commanders recognised its strategic value, such that an informal system of atrocities was established, which was both wholly predictable – indeed, it was planned – and generally deniable.

Borrer instinctively wished to claim that such violence was far from systemic and that there were no connections between the savagery of the men and the classes of officers and generals. After all, the attack on the Beni Abbès had made his blood boil 'and so did the blood of many a gallant French officer'.[52] A plausible explanation for the horrors they had witnessed in the struggle between 'the army of a civilized nation [...] in conflict with a people of the most barbarous character'[53] was the fact that:

> The ranks of the French army in Africa are composed, in great measure, of the very scum of France, intermingled with allies of the same blood, religion and ferocity as those with whom they are struggling. The difficulties of restraining such troops may account for many atrocities committed by them, as offensive to the chivalrous officers often found in command of them, as to the world at large.[54]

In other words Borrer wished to absolve the officers whose hospitality he had so enjoyed in the mountains and the desert over those past weeks, for in bivouacking with them he had come to know the differences between such men and the brutish soldiers and *zouaves* whom they led. These were the soldiers who, when Bougie was retaken, 'conducted themselves in a most outrageous manner', for 'not only did they violently attack and clean out the wine and liquor shop vi et armis, and commit other gross outrages, but sacrilegiously they broke into the French chapel and robbed it of the sacred plate'.[55]

Yet much as Borrer wished to classify and order the men of the French army in the manner in which clear forms of division were established between the Europeans and classes of Africans, he was forced to admit that 'There are certainly instances where the officers in command are as brutal as the soldiery from whose ranks they have risen'.[56] This was 'to be lamented', but it paled alongside Borrer's defence of the Bugeaudian humanitarian rationale for acts of expressive savagery:

> In other cases, policy and even humanity have required energetic and repulsive proceedings, – cruel, barbarous, and apparently unnecessary to the observant mind, – but proceedings which tended to prevent a more protracted struggle, and a consequently greater sacrifice of victims.[57]

So, in a matter of lines over a single page of his book, Borrer shifted from that defence of the razzia which blamed its excesses on the bestial qualities of the common French soldier, through a concession that such traits were also shared by the officer class, to a final admission that such attacks were planned acts, expressive of the grand goals of policy designed by political and military elites. The sequence of elisions so baldly presented in Borrer's text are of more general significance for they piece together a set of logics which are quite apparent in the army's own descriptions of events, yet always carefully separated and isolated as rationales in official communications.

This sense of Borrer compiling a catalogue of the justifications offered by the French for the ferocity of the razzia was confirmed as he went on to essay a Taussigian account of the atrocity as a response to terror:

> The only sort of excuse, for the horrors of committed by the soldiery in Algeria, is their untamed passions, and the fire added to their natural ferocity, by the atrocious cruelties so often committed by the Arabs upon their comrades in arms, who have been so unhappy as

> to fall into their power. A thirst for revenge is a passion natural to the human breast, and one of the most difficult to assuage. As the French-African soldier rushes in to overwhelm a tribe, he thinks of the many of his comrades who have been roasted alive before blazing Arab fires, – of others who have been mutilated and tortured in the most horrible manner, and their mangled bodies defiled with insults even after death; he thinks about his own sufferings, during the expedition, – of his own fate if the chances of war are against him; and every drop of Arab blood is a salve to his feelings. As he bayonets an infant, he regards it as the mere crushing of a devil's brood.[58]

Again there is the clear sense that such explanatory logics depended as much upon the imaginaries of Barbary texts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as they did on the concrete experiences of French soldiers in the nineteenth century. Read closely, as with so much in Borrer's writing there is an interesting conflation at work here between the notional excuse of revenge and the connected logic of the fears which individuals felt as a result of their comrades being butchered and the quite separate question of the hardships which French soldiers endured in Algeria. As he 'bayonets an infant' the soldier is not therefore killing a child, but avenging his comrades, protecting his own future and expelling the stresses and privations which he has endured in these arid lands. Infants, Algerians, others become mere symbols in this war; tools in the playing out of the psyche of the traumatised soldier.

As an outsider Borrer was also able to advance one further means of explaining French atrocities, which understandably lies absent from French writing, which was to compare Algeria with the terrible 'stain for cruelties practised by them [the French army] during the Peninsular war'.[59] Given the prominent role which Soult and a series of leading figures in the armée d'Afrique played in that earlier conflict, it does seem reasonable to suggest that the Algerian theatre saw not just novel forms of violence, but the adaptation of existing traditions. Just as Bertrand Taithe has shown the ways in which the repression of dissent in Paris in 1848 depended on police operations in which the army deployed both men and tactics forged in Africa, the antecedents of Algerian repression merit closer investigation.

Strikingly, as we know tended to be the case in French confrontations with Algerians, the actual threat to soldiers in this encounter with the Beni Abbès was almost nil, with two soldiers expiring in

the heat but none wounded in battle. What is more, in a clear contradiction of the claim that French deaths in battle served to justify and explain attacks on Algerians, Borrer noted that ordinary French soldiers were remarkably phlegmatic with regard to the deaths of their comrades:

> As for lamentations and weepings in the French camp, for comrades sacrificed upon the altar of 'La Gloire,' they were not in vogue at all, and any symptoms of regret were soon drowned in the wine-cup. 'Ah dam! aujourd'hui lui, demain moi! – Hazard de la guerre?'[60]

While there was no doubt that Borrer sought to shock the sensibilities of his English readership in such accounts, there is nothing in his words which contradicts the French army's own reports of such expeditions. His is simply a more fleshed-out narrative of the more allusive tone of the official report, and in some ways what seems most revealing about his text is not the specific horrors enjoined on Algerians, but the enumeration of the systematic and completist qualities of such razzias. It was quite plain that a peace was not made until all had been killed and, additionally, that the habitus on which they had depended was purged:

> The summit once attained, however, the lust of plunder gave strength to the troops; and dashing over the walls and through the gateways, the scenes which had taken place in the villages below were acted over, but with increased attendant horrors; for was it not the refuge of the women and the aged? Ravished, murdered, burnt, hardly a child lived to tell the tale. A few of the women fled to the ravines around the village; but troops swept the brushwood; and the stript and mangled bodies of females might there be seen.[61]

All that was not borne away by the spoilers was devoured by fire, or buried amidst the crashing ruins; and then the hungry flames, vomited forth from the burning habitations, gained the tall corn growing around these villages, and, running, swiftly on, wound about and consumed the scattered olive-trees overshadowing it. Fire covered the face of the country, and the heavens were obscured with smoke.[62]

At the close of their assault, just two or three of the French soldiers had died, in each case 'Desperate exertion and intense heat had killed them' rather than any form of resistance.[63] The'*man-hunt* (for it was little else)'[64] was over, 'the exhausted dogs of war lay stretched upon the ground',[65] pronouncing that that the country was:

> 'joliment nettoyé;' and I heard two ruffians, after the sacking was over, relating, with great gusto, how many young girls had been burnt in one house after being abused by their brutal comrades and themselves. They pronounced the house 'joliment nettoyé' also. Indeed it was a very favourite phrase with them.[66]

The tone of such macabre joshing is of significance not simply for what it tells us about the grisly humour of French soldiers in Algeria but also because we are able to establish a clear linguistic connection between the language of exterminatory cleansing which characterised much polemic French writing about Algerians (of the kind collected by Le Cour Grandmaison), the dreams of a *tabula rasa* shared by many of the generals who ruled the colony and the particular annihilatory behaviour of troops in this instance, as they too fell into a purificatory tone to describe their actions.

Borrer's account closes with a description of the peace which was subsequently made with the leadership of the remaining 40,000 or so of the Beni Abbès, who well understood the consequences of not entering into such a treaty with the French.[67] The fragility of such forms of concord came not simply from its having been achieved through force rather than persuasion or conviction, but a more general French misunderstanding of 'the Muslim mind', for:

> The submission of this great tribe (like that of all the African tribes ostensibly subject to or allied with the French) will doubtless prove a mere temporal subjection; for, as we have said, the French invasion is looked upon as a mere passing cloud, and the Moslem only 'bides his time.' He is confident the day will come when 'the triumph of Islamism can be assured.'[68]

There is a sense here that as an external observer, Borrer had some idea of both that Muslim certainty that French rule would one day be repelled, but also the notion that the term 'Moslem' stood here as a synonym of 'culture' for where the French viewed religion as a specific facet of life which needed to be challenged and combated, Borrer saw that Islam stood in for the very idea of life itself.

Nonetheless, Borrer confirmed the French view that the lifeworld razzia might at the very least secure an immediate form of pacification, noting that:

> Some chiefs of the neighbouring tribes presented themselves at the camp, both this day and the preceding; for the disasters which had

> befallen the Beni Abbès served somewhat to allay their intentions of resistance. The Kabyle indeed, depending so entirely on the soil for his existence, feels heavily the devastation of his crops by a victorious army.[69]

However, the true character of such people – those ineradicable traits which might only be extinguished through more complete forms of extermination – was made plain when the troops returned to the devastated village some weeks later. On arriving they were appalled to discover that the Beni Abbès had desecrated the graves of their fallen comrades, whose corpses had been:

> Dragged out of the hasty graves made for them, and torn to pieces and burnt. A few of their mangled limbs, charred with fire, were found amongst the brushwood. Thus do these mountaineers wreak their ferocity upon the dead, when the living prove too powerful for them. They had, doubtless, held hideous orgies over these putrid carcasses, and danced like fould hools around them, as they burned, blistered, and fell to pieces before the hungry flames. And then the women and little children gloated upon the revolting remnants, and howled forth praises to Allah and their men of might.[70]

Such a passage again tells us a great deal about the French imaginary in Algeria, and the extent to which the narratives which the French constructed about both their own motives and those of their foes played important roles in justifying and generating particular behaviours. For what seems most striking in this case is not what Borrer says, nor the Shakespearean tone in which a revenge fantasy is imagined, nor even the retributive French punishments which we understand may flow from such horrors, but that which lies absent: namely the lack of any empathic consideration of the position of a group of people who had endured the slaughter of scores of their own children, women and men. In such circumstances it hardly seems surprising that the pair of graves the French left behind should have been desecrated and if Borrer the traveller had truly been an outsider in this situation, one might have expected him to recognise this. Instead, he again internalises that typical sense of French selfhood in Africa in which the European had the capacity to be himself while also entering into the mind of his antagonist.

7
An Algerian Genocide?

On n'a jamais dit, en Afrique, que tout était fini.

Bugeaud

Algeria would have been an extremely unusual settler colony had it experienced no genocidal moment. As Herman Merivale, professor of political economy at Oxford from 1837 until 1842, remarked:

> The history of the European settlements in America, Africa, and Australia presents everywhere the same general features – *a wide and sweeping destruction of native races* by controlled violence of individuals, if not of colonial authorities, followed by tardy attempts on the part of governments to repair the acknowledged crime.[1]

Indeed it has been more generally argued that since the colonial encounter pitted industrial and commercial agriculture against premodern forms of farming, there was an inevitability to the manner in which the advanced sought to displace the regressive, just as pastoral societies had displaced 'nomadic ones on the Eurasian continent'.[2] As Donald Denoon has remarked, 'The coexistence of commercial farming and nomadism was impossible everywhere in the long run', while Patrick Wolfe has suggested that 'settlers' interest in the land rather than labor of the nomads means that a logic of elimination characterizes settler colonialism: the nomads connection to the land needed to be vitiated by their absorption into or expulsion from the new society'.[3]

The question as to whether there was some form of genocide in nineteenth-century Algeria is evidently a loaded one, but it warrants an answer, not so as to place French imperialism in the dock, but simply because the experiences of the colony merit comparison with other settler colonies. Histories of Australia, the Americas and colonial violence more generally have coalesced around the question of genocide and

those debates offer new ways of describing the particularities of Algeria's cultures of violence. Importantly, just as close readings of the massacres of the tribes of Namibia and the aboriginal peoples of Queensland and Tasmania have come to change our more general understanding of the history of genocide, it may be that the Algerian story has much to add to that discussion.

Algeria was, after all, different in the sense that it was originally not just a settler colony but a military settler colony, populated by more than a hundred thousand soldiers at its peak. It played a key role in establishing a new form of colonial template for France and, arguably, the 'new' European imperialism of the later nineteenth century. It is, however, almost wholly ignored in the genocide literature, which has focused on the anglophone world and its imperium, in striking contrast to the way in which Algeria played a central role in studies of twentieth-century colonial violence and decolonisation. [4]

French writers of the 1830s and '40s certainly compared the nascent Algerian colony with the experiences of other settler colonies. As the French Deputy Amédée Desjobert noted in 1838, it was commonly believed that 'the first step towards colonisation was the extermination of indigenous peoples'.[5] In the case of Algeria, if 'the complete extermination of the Algerian population' was not possible, then at the very least the British example in America should be followed, 'with partial extermination and the complete dispersal [refoulement]' of local populations.

Desjobert called for honesty in admitting that France wanted to exterminate Algerians, observing that this was a predictable outcome in colonial situations and that it needed to be acknowledged that an exterminatory 'système' had already been established in Algeria.[6] This was partly founded on a racialised view of Algeria in which the presence of other races militated against the potential success of the French: the 'Arabs would never change their ways',[7] the Kabyles 'were still more intractable'[8] and the Moors and Jews were incapable of working the land.[9] Desjobert admitted, nonetheless, that the significance of these categorisations was predicated on the French desire to take land, to exploit it and to export settlers from the metropole. None of these things had been countenanced by Algeria's previous imperial masters, the Ottomans, who had not therefore needed to follow the French path of 'l'extermination des indigènes'.[10]

Interestingly, one of the very few instances of a colonial text which imagined the effects of French rule upon Algerians came from this same moment when, in 1837, the French General Baudrand (writing anonymously) asserted that:

> All that has been said excludes the possibility of our establishing complete domination based on our force of arms. This would entail nothing less than the extermination or the expulsion of the Arabs; because our violence would fall directly upon them, whilst history has shown that they are far from easy to place under the yoke of a foreign power.[11]

Such a view was also rare in the French military for the manner in which it imagined a limited form of dominion in Algeria, while many of Baudrand's peers had promoted an idea of a totalising mission, meriting huge resources and the countenancing of radical solutions to impediments placed in France's path. Yet, as Baudrand observed, such a course would lead to French violence 'falling directly' upon Algerians, whom he noted had initially viewed France as a potential liberator from Ottoman subjugation and who had offered the impression that she had neither the will nor the power to enforce a comprehensive subjection of the peoples of Algeria.[12]

The history of genocide

One of the most striking features of contemporary literatures on genocide is the manner in which they have returned to the work of the originator of the term, Raphael Lemkin. Such moves have attempted to reclaim plural and complex ideas of the character and formation of genocides that contrast with popular understandings of the term and a focus on the Holocaust. In coining the idea, Lemkin had suggested that genocides could be perpetrated by a whole series of means, of which programmatic extermination was but one variant:

> Generally speaking, genocide does not mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killing of all members of a nation [...] The end may be accomplished by the forced disintegration of political and social institutions, of the culture of the people, of their language, their national feeling and their religion. It may be accompanied by wiping out all basis of personal security, liberty, health and dignity. When these means fail, the machine gun can be utilized as a last resort.[13]

Critically, Lemkin conceived of a variety of types of genocide, which as well as informing the United Nations' Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide has inspired scholars to enrich his

typology of forms of genocide through historical examples. Lemkin also held to a 'holistic conception of genocide' in which the destruction of cultures, ecologies and life chances, which constituted a form of 'total social practice', could be as critical to genocidal projects as planned slaughter.[14]

A similar move has taken place in recent anthropological writing on genocide, which has sought to critique intentionalist understandings of the term (especially that of Bauman), which insist on the late modern specificity of the Holocaust, through genealogical investigations of eliminatory cultures that existed outside the time and space of the modern west.[15] Like Lemkin, anthropologists such as Nancy Scheper-Hughes have sought to develop new forms of language to describe specific forms of genocide, as seen in her notion of a genocide continuum:

> I have suggested a genocide continuum made up of a multitude of 'small wars and invisible genocides' conducted in the normative social spaces of public schools, clinics, emergency rooms, hospital wards, nursing homes, court rooms, prisons, detention centers, and public morgues. The continuum refers to the human capacity to reduce others to nonpersons, to monsters, or to things that give structure, meaning, and rationale to everyday practices of violence.[16]

Where, we might then ask, might Algerian experiences of the nineteenth century fit along such a continuum at different moments in time? This idea is in itself theoretically beholden to a set of concepts developed from the work of Pierre Bourdieu, which of course had their origins in studies of the experience of life in the Kabylie in the later period of the twentieth century. As Scheper Hughes writes:

> By including the normative, everyday forms of violence hidden in the minutia of 'normal' social practices – in the architecture of homes, in gender relations, in communal work, in the exchange of gifts, and so forth – Bourdieu forces us to reconsider the broader meanings and status of violence, especially the links between the violence of everyday life and explicit political terror.[17]

What seems interesting about such ideas is the manner in which they also seem to speak to a much earlier period, recalling the manner in which destruction of homes, crops, silos and livelihoods was so crucial in the Algerian experience of violence. What is more that culture of violence was seen as being connected to notions of exchange, for a key

component in the explanatory culture of French aggression in the 1830s and '40s was that certain forms of brutality which could not usually be countenanced became justified precisely because Algerians had spurned the gift of the *mission civilisatrice*. Indeed, it was the seemingly wholesale rejection of this beneficent project which validated equally completist aspirations for just forms of killing.

Another distinct feature of the new history of genocide has been its willingness to complicate the question of intent, moving away from the commonplace that genocides must necessarily be rigorously planned exercises in mass slaughter to look at the detailed manner in which groups died out in the past, most especially in the nineteenth century. Focusing on the Australian case as a colonial exemplar, Moses suggests that while it was rare that an 'exterminatory intent be discerned in British authorities [...] there was a greater degree of consciousness about the fatal impact of their presence' than many have acknowledged.[18] More particularly:

> The fact is that European powers knew the outcome of their settlement projects. They were well aware of the choices, and were prepared to countenance their consequences. [...] Where genocide was not consciously willed, then it was implicitly intended in the sense of the silent condoning, sometimes agonized acceptance of a chain of events for which they were co-responsible and were not prepared to rupture.[19]

This focus on understanding genocide through an examination of the likely consequences of the actions of colonists is also possessed of historical pedigree, in that it relates to two sets of ideas from the worlds of such Europeans. The first was the manner in which ethnic extinctions were countenanced in the new science, seen in Darwin's remark of 1839 that 'Wherever the European has trod, death seems to pursue the aboriginal. [...] The varieties of man seem to act on each other; in the same way as different species of animals the stronger always extirpating the weaker.'[20] Or, as Le Cour Grandmaison put it with regard to the views of those in Algeria, 'the massacre, extermination, the complete disappearing of others, is not a crime but the result of the struggle between the superior and the inferior races, whose inferiority necessarily leads to a just form of annihilation'.[21] Such 'scientific arguments' became complemented by social Darwinian arguments which contended that the surfeit of labour in the European economy, and the attendant political discontent this brewed, might be fruitfully exported to colonies.[22]

In Algeria this manifested itself in the form of not only the promotion of migration of the French poor but the offer of becoming French to still poorer Spaniards, Italians, Maltese and Greeks, while, as we have seen, a militarised form of capitalism sought to exert monopolistic control over the Algerian economy.

The second, and more surprising insight, comes from Moses's re-examination of contemporary legal understandings of intention. As he notes, in the nineteenth century English law moved from the concept of *mens rea*, in which guilt was predicated on an individual's premeditated intent, towards the idea that 'a person was inferred to have intended the "natural consequences" of his or her actions: if the result proscribed was reasonably foreseeable as a likely consequence of his or her actions, the presumption was that the accused had intended the result'.[23] Of still greater relevance to the French example was the fact that 'the concept of *dolus eventualis*, found in the criminal law of civil law countries', predominated, 'which judges the consequences which one might reasonably expect to emanate from policy, rather than strict intention itself'.[24] While the juridical relationship between this notion and the somewhat amorphous nexus of domestic, international and military law in the 1840s is evidently complex, it is critical to recognise that Europeans tended to think that outcomes mattered as well as intentions and that crimes could be determined as much by their result as their design.

Such discussions also emanate from debates between 'intentionalist' and 'structuralist' explanatory models of genocide, which contrast the former's stress on the archetype of the Holocaust and its programme for killing and the latter's shift away from 'perpetrator agency and intention by highlighting anonymous "genocidal processes" of cultural and physical destruction'.[25] The fact that colonial violence tends to be more amenable to structuralist explanation has in itself induced a critique of intentionalism that calls for the historic significance of the violence of nineteenth-century empire to be recognised. As Mark Mazower has said:

> I think there may also have been a widely-held unspoken assumption that the mass killing of African or American peoples was a distant and in some cases 'inevitable' part of progress while what was genuinely shocking was the attempt to exterminate an entire people in Europe. This assumption may rest on an implicit racism, or simply upon a failure of the historical imagination; it leads, in either case, to the view that it was specifically in the Holocaust that European civilization – the values of the Enlightenment, a confidence in progress and

> modernity – finally betrayed itself. This view claims both too much and too little. If there had indeed been such a betrayal, had it not occurred rather earlier, outside Europe?[26]

Such a view also finds support in Lemkin's original notion that genocides were 'intrinsically colonial',[27] Hannah Arendt's assertion that 'imperialism was the precursor to National Socialism'[28] and more recent work by scholars such as Jürgen Zimmerer which has sought to show that the Holocaust was in some ways the end point of a project and praxis of annihilation which began with the destruction of the Herero and the Nama in German Southwest Africa.[29]

An interesting feature of the Algerian case is the fact that it is amenable both to intentionalist and structuralist analysis, for the first of these categories has tended to be seen to be less applicable to colonial situations. This has partly been held to be the case because 'perpetrator agency' has been hard to identify, given that 'the colonial state was akin to the premodern state, governing via "mediating" powers, and usually not disposing over a monopoly of coercive powers within its claimed borders', in which 'Settlers often outstripped the regulatory capacity of the metropolitan authority'.[30] While it is true that the armée d'Afrique could in one sense be treated as a group similar to those settlers of, say, Australia who perpetrated massacres outside of the control of the metropole, we have also seen the ways in which the French army targeted particular tribal groups with clear forms of agency and with quite explicit backing from the very highest levels of metropolitan authority. A more germane problem with the intentionalist approach would seem to be the fact 'that most Indigenous deaths in colonizing contexts resulted from European diseases, as well as from intensified intra-Indigenous violence that attended the displacement of peoples from their traditional lands'.[31] The explicit quality of French attempts to destroy the ecologies of the Indigènes again merit consideration as being both intentionalist and structural, certainly as compared with, say, the Columbian exchange.

Colonial historians' critiques of the intentionalist model have also generated means of understanding violence, such as Anne Habeich's notion of there having been an 'incremental genocide' in Western Australia across the period 1900–40. As she says:

> Insisting on premeditation and planning ignores the fact that government intentions evolve over time as policy-makers, faced with changing circumstances, head in directions they had not foreseen.

> Moreover, policy does not develop in a vacuum, but is driven by state interaction with society; in the colonial context, with rapacious settlers who incessantly lobby state authorities to expel or otherwise 'deal' with the Indigenous presence in their midst.[32]

These are a set of circumstances quite comparable to the shifts in policy which took place in Algeria over the period 1830–47, in which the prerogatives of the state shifted as a colonial state with its own sense of power came to be made, and as that authority liaised with the metropole in lobbying for support to solve the problem of recalcitrant impediments to French authority.

Helpfully, historians of colonial genocide have also been instinctively suspicious of the value of military history as a mode of capturing the experiences of conquerors and the conquered. Where the genre of military history tended to treat imperial wars as being comparable to intra-European conflicts, writers such as Dirk Moses have pointed out the stark differences which need to be acknowledged in the extra-European context:

> Colonial conquest and warfare possess a number of potentially genocidal dimensions. In the first place, the aim of the colonizer was not just to defeat military forces but also to annex territory and rule over a foreign people. War aims were not limited, as they customarily were in intra-European wars; they were absolute. 'Colonial conquerors came to stay.' Second, the colonizer often ended up waging war against the entire population because it was difficult to distinguish between civilians and combatants, especially when guerrilla-style resistance ensued. The often flat political structures of indigenous peoples meant that the colonizer could not easily identify leaders and 'decapitate' the local polity. Colonial war could mean total war on a local scale.[33]

While Moses has Australia in mind as an exemplar of such phenomena, his description is wholly applicable to Algeria and reveals the stark difference of approaches between military history and the history of genocide. Where the former genre, often drawing on early histories from the nineteenth century, wishes to shape history according to the conventions of writing about wars, battles and campaigns, the latter's focus on the effects of such conflict generates the idea that quite novel forms of war emerged in imperial settings, as Le Cour Grandmaison analysed in his account of new forms of 'total war' in Algeria. Moses also looks in

more detail at the triggers for events which might be considered genocidal, suggesting that it was often the surprising character of the resistance Europeans faced in these new theatres of war which was generative of new forms of violence, for 'real or imagined resistance to imperial or national rule can radicalize a policy of conquest or "pacification." Resistance leads to reprisals and counterinsurgency that can be genocidal when they are designed to ensure that never again would such resistance occur.'[34] Again, there is the reminder of French obsessions with pacification, reprisals and the communicative desire to ensure that resistance would finally be quelled.

As well as the idea of 'incremental genocide', notions of the 'genocidal massacre' and the 'genocidal moment' have also been proposed as analytic tools. The concept of the distinct form of the 'genocidal massacre' has been associated with Leo Kuper as a key feature of what he has termed a 'genocidal process' in which 'massacres, appropriation of land, introduction of diseases, and arduous conditions of labor' combined in the deaths of specific groups, such that their annihilation 'arose not so much by deliberate act' but through the combination of a distinct set of interlocking effects which had the elimination of a people as their clear outcome.[35] In one sense it is the massacre that predominates in this process because of the manner in which it can stand as an intentionalist trigger in a functionalist system. Kuper therefore insists that care needs to be taken in identifying massacres which might be claimed as being genocidal, citing three preconditions which need to be met: first, assessing whether they are isolated events or part of a 'total campaign' against a group; second, 'whether the attack is part of a coordinated series of actions that are replicated elsewhere'; and, third, 'whether, given these considerations, the attack was committed by the state (or a state-sanctioned proxy) as an act of policy – that is, that the attack was within the law as determined by the governing authorities of the locality'.[36]

Massacres therefore need to be programmed and to be conceived of as a specific form of warfare which was sanctioned by governmental authorities as well as commanders in the field. Given all that we know of the history of the razzia, it seems unsurprising that when Kuper turns to history to illustrate his claims, he alights on the Algerian example (as does Ben Kiernan in identifying Algeria as an exemplary case of 'settler genocide'[37]):

> Moreover, where a somewhat enduring relationship between colonizer and colonized is established, the situation may still be

> conducive to genocidal massacre. The relationship may be deeply charged with conflict from its inception in an extremely brutal conquest, as in the French conquest of Algeria, with its massacres and other atrocities, and its deliberate destruction of homes and orchards – the ravaging of a land and its people.[38]

A related notion which we find in the extensive literature on Australia is the idea of the 'genocidal moment', which itself is often seen as a part of a process amenable to structuralist explanation. Take, for example, Pamela Watson's work on the Karuwali in which she notes that:

> In addition to the continent-wide replication of components implicated in the deaths of the *Karuwali*, the results that genocide produced can be identified over much of Queensland and elsewhere. Consider the severe declines in the population of indigenous people, the disappearance of some ethnic communities, and the reduction of others to a meagre number of scattered survivors. It seems valid to conclude, therefore, that a cause-and-effect relationship operated, and that many local small-scale genocides occurred across the country at the time of pastoral settlement.[39]

The language used in describing such 'small-scale genocides' reveals quite how far colonial historians have shifted understandings of the idea of genocide from the programmatic archetype. The validity of that move might be questioned, but my purpose here is not to debate what does or does not merit the title 'genocide' but to evaluate where nineteenth-century Algeria might be located in the field. Watson's notion of 'the continent-wide replication of components' of mass killing is suggestive, in that it encourages the idea that on local levels settlers and soldiers learned how to subdue Indigènes and that the systematic reproduction of such methods might proceed quite informally across a colony. As Moses writes:

> Instead of arguing statistically that the colonization of Australia was genocidal *tout court*, or insisting truculently that it was essentially benevolent and progressive, it is analytically more productive to view it as a dynamic process with genocidal potential which could be released in circumstances of crisis. The place to look for genocidal intentions, then, is not in explicit, prior statements of settlers or governments, but in the gradual evolution of European attitudes and

> policies as they were pushed in an exterminatory direction by the confluence of their underlying ideological assumptions, the acute fear of Aboriginal attack, the demands of the colonial and international economy, their plans for the land, and the resistance to these plans by the Indigenous peoples.[40]

Moses's notion of 'a dynamic process with genocidal potential which could be released in circumstances of crisis' evidently tallies with Watson's evaluation of the larger importance of 'small-scale genocides' and his broader aim of reconfiguring the place of intentionalist and structuralist modes in our understanding of colonial genocide. It is also quite striking how his sketching of the hopes, desires and fears of the colonial mind – fear of attack, plans for the land, reactions to resistance – tally as neatly with the Algerian case as they do the Australian.

Genocide in nineteenth-century Algeria

The fact that scholarship on nineteenth-century Algeria has traditionally avoided the question as to whether any genocide took place can be explained in a number of ways:

(1) It may simply be the case that the question has not arisen because – on the basis of the documentary records left from the colony – it was instinctively felt that such a question did not apply to Algeria.
(2) The generic conventions of military and colonial history have tended to exclude the idea of genocide as an analytic tool. This would certainly seem to be the case in classic works on the colony by writers such as Ageron, Julien and Rey-Goldzeiguer, which are brilliant pieces of scholarship unafraid to criticise the behaviour of French colonists, yet also bound by the conventions of thinking and writing of their moments and the genres in which they operated.
(3) Writing on Algeria has tended to either look exclusively at that colony or, where comparisons are made, to set it alongside later French colonial acquisitions of the nineteenth century. Few attempts have been made to compare Algeria with other settler colonies and no connections have been made with the – generally Anglophone – new history of genocide. This much is made plain in even the best recent histories of the colony which have taken violence as a specific theme worthy of consideration, as seen in Brower's claim that:

> While the actions of the French colonial state indisputably contributed to the extreme violence witnessed in the twentieth century [...] there is no direct path leading from Algeria to Auschwitz as some have suggested. France never embraced a policy designed to exterminate Algerians, nor was there a systematic attempt to push Algerians entirely out of the country and take their land.[41]

Whether one agrees or disagrees with Brower, what is plain here is that the rigid functionalism which underpins such views is dependent on notions of causation and intention which have been powerfully critiqued in studies of colonial genocide. What Brower takes as evidence of a definitive rejection of the possibility of there having been a genocide – the lack of a national policy and the unsystematic character of violence – would of course be viewed as precisely the kind of areas which ought to be probed by structuralist historians of colonial genocide.[42]

(4) Until now, most discussion of genocide in Algeria has focused on the twentieth century, especially on the period beginning with the massacre at Sétif of 1945, taking in the atrocities of the War of Independence (1954–62) and concluding with the bloody Civil War of the 1990s, in works such as Pierre Vidal-Naquet's *Les Crimes de l'armée française,* Yves Bénot's *Massacres coloniaux, 1944–1950*, Alastair Horne's *A Savage War of Peace*, Amar Belkhodja's *Barbarie coloniale en Afrique* (2002) and Robert Fisk's *The Great War for Civilisation*.[43] There has also been strong resistance, especially in the work of James McDougall,[44] to the idea that any form of connections ought to be made between cultures of violence across the nineteenth or twentieth centuries or the notion that the bloody massacres of the 1950s and the 1990s may have their genealogical roots in the razzias of the 1840s.
(5) Discussions of colonial violence, such as those on the use of torture in the War of Independence, have inevitably fed into a broader cultural debate on the character of the French empire. As Brower notes, this debate has become remarkably polarised between a 'légende rose' and a 'légende noire', and has of course been played out in a series of public spheres, including the press, parliament and schools, as well as in academic literatures.[45]
(6) In the main inspired by hostility to the work of Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, a great deal of energy has been spent discussing the

> significance of nineteenth-century French texts which advocated the idea of 'extermination' in Algeria.[46] It may well be the case that establishing causal connections between such work, along with the allied promotion of 'massacres', 'annihilation' and 'refoulement', and the deaths of specific groups of Indigènes is not possible, but, equally, it does not hold that the failure to make such a connection renders the currency of such ideas as being unimportant. As Hannoum noted, the imaginative task of the historian might include the forging of such connections, for the difficulty of threading causal links between texts and acts does not exclude the possibility that there might be links between the two. As we have seen in the work of Borrer and others, French soldiers were themselves obsessed by the violence of the world in which they lived and which they were making. What is more, the moral qualities of such obsessions were relentlessly discussed in their letters, diaries and reports, As one such soldier, Montagnac, wrote at the time, 'If I let my verve for extermination carry me away, I could fill four pages for you on the subject.'[47]

The Australian example is again germane given the promotion of comparable ideas in strikingly similar language at the same moment in time, with writers asserting, for instance, that 'Desperate diseases call for strong remedies and while we would regret a war of extermination, we cannot but admit there exists a stern, though maybe cruel necessity for it.'[48] Newland, meanwhile, 'wrote of the of "the wiping out process" in Queensland, where the "dispersal" of natives, "put plainly, meant nearly indiscriminate slaughter." He went on to add, "Of course, these stories will be denied." '[49]

Whichever of these six reasons have been the most important in negating the question as to whether there was a genocide in nineteenth-century Algeria, it is striking how they are generally arguments from ignorance, either of the quite specific character of debates in the history of genocide or, more importantly, the documentary records of the French army. Allegations of historical genocide tend to be viewed as wild assertions driven by ideology, but in the Algerian case I would argue that the reverse could be argued to be the case, for it is primarily down to questions of taste and disciplinary codes that the genocide question has not been asked, whereas it is precisely the more sober examination of relevant academic debates and documentary evidence which might lead to the posing of such a question.

Genocide in Algeria 1830–47

In attempting to describe and measure France's genocidal impact on Algeria in the period 1830–47, it would therefore seem to make sense to try and tally the ideas and insights of the new historians of genocide with archival records of life in the colony. On that basis we might then move towards an evaluation of the key areas of systemic planning, the effects on the lives of groups of Indigènes, demographic impact and the specificities of the Algerian situation. Those particularities are evidently important in determining what the Algerian case might add to the history of genocide, in terms of our stock of knowledge and, as importantly, the concepts and typologies used in interpreting such knowledge.

Beginning with Mark Mazower, there would seem to be similarities between the 'failure of the historical imagination' which Mazower imputed to intentionalist accounts of genocide that focused on intra-European violence at the expense of the actions of Europeans in their colonies, with the limitations of scholarly work on Algeria. That body of writing has also imagined a general set of interpretative frames through which to read the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, in which the earlier story told is of the progressive unfolding of the French empire in Africa, while the collapse of empire in the later period has merited a language of destruction and dismemberment appropriate to the horrors of the wars of the twentieth century.

Equally Lemkin's account of genocide as a 'total social practice', which encompassed the destruction of health, security and dignity, closely mirrors French aspirations for the razzia as the means by which the very bases of life were eliminated such that those Indigènes who remained lived at the behest of the colonial authorities. This is not to say that all Algerians were targeted in this fashion, but it is quite plain that Lemkin and his heirs understood that such genocide as a 'total social practice' did not imply a desire to exterminate the totality of a population. Indeed, the more one thinks about the obsession with defining genocides only in completist terms, the more disingenuous such critiques seem, not least since such scenarios would not have been practical in colonies where tiny minorities governed large and dispersed populations. This point was made in the French Chamber of Deputies in the 1830s when some realism was urged in debates on extermination, when it was contended that the cost of the complete elimination of Algeria could never be met no matter how desirable it might seem as an aim. It was also quite evidently the case that France successfully pacted with a proportion of Arab and Kabyle tribes from the early days of the colony,

and that while some of these treaty arrangements may have faltered over time, many endured such that France could never have been seen to have engaged in some form of race war in Algeria.

In the Algerian case, we might also note that Lemkin's point connects with the anthropological approach of Scheper-Hughes and others, in which the notion of a 'genocide continuum' was used to describe that collection of small and large means by which the dignity of one portion of the human community was removed such that systematic forms of violence might ordinarily be deployed against them – an idea which inheres to the French even before they arrived in Algeria, for the preparations for dehumanisation and the development of naturally violent responses had been made in the construction of the idea of Barbary.

Moving to the work of Dirk Moses, a series of connections can be made with the Algerian situation. The first and most general point is that, like Australia at a concurrent moment, Algeria would seem to suit an approach which while largely structuralist also includes a clear notion of intentionalist agency. Violence wrought upon Algerians tended, after all, to be planned even if it seemed to be unplanned (and if it were deemed more politic for it to be represented as being unplanned). While the armée d'Afrique may have wanted and have been wanted to be seen to be a power independent of metropolitan control, the detailed fabric of correspondence between Soult and commanders in Algeria reveals how, in private, even proponents of legalism were architects of an annihilatory culture. Much of the wider French polity, including portions of the press and the political classes, really did resent the barbaric qualities of colonial rule, but such qualms were generally held by those without power, while those with power carefully guarded their knowledge of its effects.

Moses's note on the need for a new history of colonial war outside of the confines of military history would also seem to fit the Algerian case as much as it does the Australian. In both instances the manner in which the distinction between combatants and civilians was erased in new forms of counterinsurgency merits closer investigation, not least since such divisions were of course elided in the records of the colonising powers (though not so successfully that we do not have some sense of the manner in which civilians began to be targeted in ways which were quite unlike European wars).

Finally, Moses's work on intent and the manner in which historians ought to consider both predictable and intended outcomes offers an important counterweight to the standard assumption of most work on Algeria which has sought to exclude genocide as a category of analysis

primarily because clear forms of intent have been hard to discern. As Rowse, Curthoys, Mann, Bartrop and other historians of Australia have shown, the detailed remaking of societies predicated upon new ideas of racial hierarchies had as its result the progressive extinction of inferior races. The stock of details and remarks upon Algerian life which would confirm the comparability of its situation is colossal. As Aimable-Jean-Jacques Pélissier, who later became the infamous slaughterer of the Ouled Riah at Dahra (for which he was rewarded with the Governor Generalship and a dukedom), remarked, 'In my eyes, the skin of one our drums is worth more than the skins of all these miserable specimens.'[50]

The concentration on the destructive capacity and explanatory power of the razzia in Algeria would also seem to connect to Kuper's categories of the 'genocidal massacre' and the 'genocidal process' (or Hebeich's 'incremental genocide'), for Bugeaud's aims for the razzia, as it developed towards its lifeworld and exterminatory forms, mirrored Kuper's identification of a processual concatenation of massacres, habitat destruction and reorientations of traditional economies. Such 'interlocking effects' were specifically countenanced by the French in Algeria, where massacres met each of three preconditions for their being described as being genocidal: first, they were programmed rather than being isolated instances of random violence; second, they were explicitly coordinated and managed across a series of campaigns; and, third, they were 'committed by the state (or a state-sanctioned proxy) as an act of policy' for, unlike many instances in Australia, these were not the work of settler communities but coordinated by the army of the state as it settled the land.

One of the more apt points of comparison between Australia and Algeria would seem to be the manner in which they shared Pamela Watson's notion of genocidal moments, in which a series of 'local small-scale genocides' had as their effect the 'the disappearance of some ethnic communities, and the reduction of others to a meagre number of scattered survivors'. Reading Watson's words we cannot help but think of the many letters between men such as Soult, Baraguey d'Hilliers and Bugeaud, in which they spoke in approving terms of their desire to 'reduce' particular tribes, their success in doing so and their certainty that the small remainder of Indigènes who survived such targeted razzias were now placed in a position where they could not but accept French rule. That programme revealed something of a difference as compared with Moses's related notion of moments of 'genocidal potential which could be released in circumstances of crisis', for whereas the Australian case would ultimately seem to lend itself to structuralist explanation,

in the manner in which massacres were dispersed across time and (most especially) space, razzias in Algeria were much more tightly confined geographically and temporally, more effectively controlled and managed by a clear group of actors.

The question then arises as to what kinds of sources we might appeal to in order to substantiate claims of intentionalist agency – of genocide having been systemic in Algeria. As Le Cour Grandmaison has observed, there has certainly been a strong tendency to deny any claim of systemic assault, with a preference for the description of a series of 'excesses which might be blamed on the passions of the era and laid at the doors of a series of different actors in this war'.[51]

Yet, as we have seen, influential figures such as Desjobert had called for honesty in admitting that France wanted to exterminate Algerians, observing that this was a predictable outcome in colonial situations, and, indeed, that it needed to be acknowledged that an exterminatory 'système' had already been established in Algeria. From the earliest days of the colony, the term 'système' was commonly used in this regard, as seen in the 'confidential memo' sent to Governor General Berthezène in September 1831 by Barrachin, 'sous-intendant civil', advocating a colonisation of Algeria based on 'a slow and progressive dispersal ["refoulement"] of the Indigènes and their replacement with an imported population'.[52] As Desjobert noted at the time the real meaning of the euphemistic 'refoulement' was plain yet it was also a means for the self to deny the true meaning of its agency upon the other: 'Up until this moment in time, no one has set out in writing the means by which the Arabs are to be exterminated ["le système d'extermination des Arabes"], for wise voices have instead taken to using the term "refoulement", without troubling the meaning of this term or looking at what it might mean.'[53]

The stark difference between the decade after which Desjobert wrote in 1837 and the earliest years of the colony was precisely that the system he described was put into place. Algeria moved from being a colony in which an ideology of extermination was accompanied by massacres which laid the ground for a violent mode of dialogue with Indigènes, to a state in which a razzia système formalised and brought together this new theory and practice of violence. Such a view was of course also foreshadowed in the work of Hamdan Khodja, who also claimed that the first years of the colony saw the development of a process in which the French learned to develop a new exterminatory system in North Africa. Looking at specific massacres, Khodja claimed to be able to see beyond such atrocities to observe that the true danger for Algerians lay

in the fact that such discrete acts together constituted the formation of a broader policy environment in which 'extermination' came to be seen as a natural feature of liberal empire. In fact, Khodja noted in Djeghloul's words, there were but two 'solutions' to France's Algerian problem: 'to fight to the point of either exterminating, subjugating or exiling Algerians, or the abandonment of the colony'.[54]

In stressing this element of choice and the structuring of political possibilities and their human consequences, Khodja displayed a remarkable insight into the way in which an avowedly exterminatory politics could come into being. It was not the case that politicians in France had originally planned to invade Algeria and to slaughter the native population, but they manoeuvred themselves into a decision-making process whereby extermination moved from being a theoretical possibility and one policy option among many to becoming a practical and logical means of resolving a difficult situation for the French army as they reacted to changing events in the colony, very similar to the Australian scenario described by Moses. There is again some tacit hint here that the idea of 'extermination' was seen as a strategy which was forced upon the French by the recalcitrance of the locals, who knowingly pushed the French towards policies which would lead to their own destruction.

The use of the term 'système' to describe models of occupation and engagement was common in the early colony as we see, for instance, in Valée's 1840 assertion that two 'systems' of warfare were apparent in Algeria, contending that his own legalist approach represented the only means by which the French would be victorious, in contrast to the nihilism which underpinned mimetic violence:

> We must accept Algeria as she is, troubles and all. Climatic conditions have consigned a good portion of the army to our hospitals, for which the only solutions are the construction of more military facilities, along with the provision of beds and a good quality enriched diet for all soldiers [...] I am far from thinking that the war will end soon – for one cannot submit a people in a few days – but I believe that my system to be superior to that of expeditions and razzia without goals.[55]

Equally, Bugeaud and his allies were enthusiastic advocates of the 'razzia système', claiming that far from being 'without goals', it afforded the possibility of true conquest and pacification in the near future, such that a new phase of more enlightened empire, on which all could agree, might come into being.

While supportive of Bugeaud's system in practice, there was no doubt that Soult and other metropolitan elites were alive to critiques of its effectiveness emanating from other sources of power in Algeria and France (as Ageron was to remark, 'While the short-term successes of "pacification" justified such a programme, in the longer-term it extended the war and entrenched Arab hostility').[56] In 1843, Soult dispatched a confidant, Fabri, to Algeria to report confidentially to him alone on the effectiveness of French governance in the colony, to which he received the blunt response that:

> For more than ten years, Algeria has had a series of governors, a series of systems, views which have been taken and then abandoned, a ravaging of the population such that we have become a vindictive empire, whilst expeditions have been made [...] and the people have lost all confidence.[57]

In other words, while there had indeed been a set of competing systems of rule in the 1830s, 'ravaging' violence had won out, such that it seemed to be clear to all actors that France had made a choice to inhabit the role of the 'vindictive empire'. Once Soult and his government had committed to the razzia in the 1830s and supported the armée d'Afrique so massively in terms of resources and manpower, it became almost impossible for them to effect a general change in policy, such as a return to legalism. They had cast their die and could only continue to wager their stake on the gamble which had been made, not least since it had become quite clear that the communicative message of French violence had reached the Indigènes, who could scarcely return to a state of innocence with regard to France's intentions for them and the colony.

The extent to which this vindictive system operated at a local level was made plain in the accounts of French razzias, while the extent to which it was conceived of as being systematic can often be found in the routine asides of reports from the front. To take one example, on 10 August 1847 the Minister was sent a report on the Cercles of Algiers which generally focused on the state of calm which existed across most of the region, excepting the Cercle d'Aumale, where it was reported that a state of 'anarchy reigned amongst the Kabyles':

> All have come to us, all have given proofs of their submission, either by paying a part of the *achour* or in returning stolen goods, yet we have still not been able to bring in all of the Djemma. Fractions of this chaotic tribe never cease to seize opportunities to ransack each other.

> So as to bring an end to this deplorable state of affairs, the tribe, on whom the security of the route to the Oued Sahel depends, are to be reduced. The superior officer in the Cercle has established a squadron upon their territory, whilst all the neighbouring tribes protected by these troops are seizing the grain of the Beni Sala. It seems probable that in persevering with this system, we will finish by completely reducing this tribe. [58]

This unexceptional reporting of the eradication of the Beni Sala is interesting on a series of levels, for it reveals the detailed fabric of genocidal massacres in Algeria and the manner in which such onslaughts were understood to cohere together as part of an approach which was deployed systematically across the country. More specifically, a combination of lifeworld and exterminatory razzias were countenanced here, in concert with French tribal allies, which had as their specific goal the complete elimination of the tribe. By 1847 the motives for such attacks were plainly driven by irritation at the continuance of resistance in lands which ought to have been pacified – in which the message of communicative violence ought to have been understood – and the practical impediments which such defiance produced in terms of its slowing the flow of troops and capital through the new militarised infrastructure mapped onto the colony. Interestingly, the text also reveals something of a grammatical shift in its short lines, for while the first mention of 'reducing' the tribe is couched in the typically indirect mode deployed earlier in the decade as a means of evading the real meaning of such words, the final account of the likely outcome of this strategy is clearer in accepting responsibility for their reduction, though even here there is some evasion in the sense of creating only a 'probable' outcome.

Viewed from the perspective of the history of genocide, such documentation clearly reveals genocidal processes at work in colonial Algeria. Killing is not only proposed here, but a set of rationales are offered as justification, while the mode of delivery of death and its ultimate outcome for a group of people, defined not as combatants but as a tribal grouping, is quite plain. The fact that the language used displays some qualms as to what is truly being countenanced and the moral basis for such extermination is of critical importance for it is plain that the writers of such documents became convinced that they had found the means by which genocidal massacres could be morally justified. The tropes and logic of such argument became commonplaces in the texts in which soldiers and administrators wrote about the colony, such that they almost became a set of clichés comparable to the way in which terms such as

'effet moral' were used to describe the effects of such violence (see, for example, the structural and argumentative similarity of this document's claims and the abundant explanatory and exculpatory literature on the massacre of the Ouled Riah at Dahra in 1845).[59]

Such genocidal outcomes can also be observed in French reporting which detailed the specific forms of suffering which razzias enjoined upon groups of Indigènes. As we have seen, overt forms of exterminatory elimination were complements to the general goal of razzias, which was the systematic impoverishment of local populations and the erasure of their means for survival. Recording that suffering was an important task, for if the advocates of razzias could show that the tribes were utterly demoralised and placed in a position where they would wish to pact with the French rather than endure such distress, then the policies directed by Bugeaud might be judged to have been successful, or more successful than those who advocated 'l'occupation restreinte'.

In the winter of 1842, for instance, it was approvingly reported that 'almost of the country is covered in snow to a degree which had not been seen in living memory. The suffering of the Arabs is extreme and their herds are dying. Those tribes allied to France are buying every horse which they can, even at a price of 600 or 700 francs a beast.'[60] The following summer between 500 and 2000 of the tribes who had followed Abd el-Kader were reported as having died from thirst and hunger.[61] That year the French placed an especial emphasis on tracking the economic and social impact of drought and the poor harvests, so as to divine where strategic opportunities might open up for them as an occupying power. It was reported that:

> A whole series of factors have led to increases in the price of grain: the harvests have been poor, those tribes who did not cultivate land because of the war have placed greater strain on the markets of the interior, which also supply our new garrisons, while Abd el-Kader has also been willing to pay very high prices for grain. Meanwhile, the great nomad tribe of the Laarba have demanded authorisation to move into the interior so as to buy the grain they need and to sell their cattle, their wool and their cloth.[62]

While the years 1868–71 – in which the power of the Second Empire and its arabophiles collapsed, France lost a war against Prussia and the *colons* gained a great victory over the army in the administration of Algeria – have traditionally been seen as a defining moment at which the French

seized economic control of her colony from the tribes, the decade of the 1840s should also be seen as an important part of this process. Thanks to the work of Rey-Goldzeiguer on the later period, we know a great deal about the ways in which these military and political crises interacted with, and were exploited so as to maximise, grave social and economic crises in tribal society which culminated in waves of famine, destitution and epidemic disease. As she so poetically put it, 'Un monde se disparaître, un autre se prépare'.[63] Yet this victory of the venal *colons*, also stressed by Ageron, has been serially misinterpreted by historians of Algeria, who saw the overt hatred of the *colons* for the Indigènes as marking an inevitable deterioration in the lives of Algerians, when the reality was that population figures began to rise from this moment onwards, for it had been the more romantic, sometimes ambiguous, always massively powerful, force of the army which had truly subjugated the Indigènes.

A very similar process appears to have occurred in 1843, a moment at which French reports were keen to connect local suffering and hardship to the campaign of razzias which formed the centrepiece of the army's military operations. The scale of the destruction of local lifeworlds was regarded as a cause for celebration, as we see in a series of notes from February of that year which reflected on the coming together of a series of French goals:

> The Beni Ferrah are utterly ruined [...] not a village, not a hut has escaped from the flames. Just like the Beni Menasser, this tribe has been severely punished. We have cut down at least twenty thousand fig and fruit trees, as well as having burned a great number of villages [...] their insurrection will never be repeated [...] the bold and cleverly calculated enterprise has met its comeuppance, while the morale of Bugeaud's troops is excellent. The governor thinks the situation 'better than before' as a result of this campaign and compares the situation with the Roman conquest, the history of Corsica and the '18 years of fruitless efforts the Russians expended before they submitted the Circassians, as well as the English lack of success' in Afghanistan. He does not believe that a real war was fought in Algeria before 1840 [il ne considère pas comme étant sérieuse la guerre qui s'est faite en Algérie avant 1840].[64]

The lifeworld razzia was quite clearly established as the appropriate mode of war in Algeria and it is interesting that Bugeaud provided a relatively rare form of comparative justification for the brutality and barbarity of the razzia in this note, explicitly measuring Algeria against

the Russian and British reliance on similar massacres and scorched-earth policies in Afghanistan and Circassia (examples oft-discussed in contemporary histories of genocide). The idea of 'real war' therefore came to be associated with genocide, while Bugeaud was also keen to stress that, in concentrating on destroying the bases of life of her foes, France was in a position to refine and develop the kinds of war which the British and the Russians had innovated, and to succeed in such tasks where those other empires had failed. Later that year Bugeaud would emphasise the role which economic control and France's having taken command of distribution channels for the sale of foodstuffs played in the war effort, decreeing that those tribes which had submitted to France were obliged to sell their grain surpluses in the interior, though of course such goods could not be made available to tribes which continued to resist French rule. 'Hunger and scarcity', he wrote, 'will come to work in our favour.'[65]

Taking one final measure of genocidal effect, the demographic consequences of a form of war built on lifeworld and exterminatory razzias were evidently considerable. Brower, writing after Kateb, reckoned that 'around 825,000 Algerian lives were ended because of the violence in the first forty-five years of the French occupation, and an equal number died in the famines and epidemics triggered, in large part by the colonial-induced economic mutations suffered by Algerian society.[66] When the emigration of people who fled colonial rule is counted, Algeria lost a total of nearly half its precolonial population, from about four million people in 1830 to the roughly two million Algerians (indigènes) counted in 1872.'[67] Other estimations of population decline vary – Xavier Yacono believed the population to have declined by 650,000, or 20%, in the period 1830–56,[68] while Kateb contended that a slightly larger number of 700,000 perished in the 1860s alone – but what is generally accepted is that the French empire induced an Algerian demographic catastrophe.

Our knowledge is constrained by the limited nature of French attempts to count the population in the period, but there are some indications that the scale of population decline in the key decades of the 1840s, '50s and '60s, as the cumulative effects of lifeworld and exterminatory razzias took hold, may have been even greater than has been believed. For instance, an administrative note from 4 September 1842, calling for a more precise census to be established, estimated the total population in Algeria as being 5.6 million inhabitants.[69] If this figure is correct, the scale of decline over the following two decades may have been much steeper than has been supposed.

In a sense the exactness of such data ought not to be seen to be critical, for to insist on absolute demographic precision in colonial situations is

implausible and cannot be used as a means of evading the broader story told by such knowledge. It is to be hoped, nonetheless, that North Africa will benefit from work which draws on the colonial modelling which writers such as Bruce Fetter, Judith L. Richell and W. George Lovell have undertaken on Central Africa, Burma and Latin America.[70] The data we possess, along with our detailed knowledge of the culture and practice of violence in the colony, allow for the description of a sustained genocidal moment in the history of colonial Algeria, beginning in the late 1830s and lasting at least two decades.

Writers such as Frémeaux have sought to separate out the deaths of those who died from famine and disease from those Algerians who died in combat, seeking to suggest that mortality rates in Algeria were not necessarily substantially higher than those of neighbouring Tunis in the period 1830–60.[71] Such an approach, however, seems illegitimate given the express desire of the French authorities that hunger, misery, drought, cold and disease should be seen as tools of war, which were explicitly engineered in many cases and designed and systematised in particular forms of razzias. In truth, it was the combination of lifeworld and exterminatory razzias which finally allowed France to gain control of her colony and to make of it a governable national space, for it was quite plain that the mixed messages of legalist and exterminatory systems had not effectively conveyed a coherent offer to Algerian populations in the 1830s.

The Algerian case certainly tallies with Mike Davis's new approach to the history of 'natural disasters', in which he proposed that the actions of men, especially empires, be written into ecological history, so as to unpick the mix of the 'natural' and the 'unnatural' in the generation of famines and other environmental catastrophes. In *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World*, Davis recounts what he calls 'The secret history of the nineteenth century' which suggests that the great global famines of the period were essentially caused by the new economies and ecologies of European imperialism, and that the deaths of millions in those catastrophes amounted to a series of genocides.[72] His specific concern was the avoidable global famines and waves of disease in 1876–79, 1889–91 and 1896–1902, in which perhaps as many as 50 million people died, but does his thesis also hold for the Algerian case we are considering?[73] Davis contended that global famines were far from accidental or random occurrences at this time, but were used by Europeans as a means of expanding and deepening their empires. It was not just European governments that bore responsibilities for such disasters but also its

capital, for Davis's thesis is dependent as much on the manner in which notionally decentred capitalism created a set of environmental conditions across the colonised world in the Victorian period which reduced the capacity of conquered societies to cope with environmental shocks.

Interestingly, Algeria in the period 1868–71 serves as one of his case studies (a rare example of the primarily Anglophone history of genocide offering a comparison with the French empire). Yet the starkest difference between that later period and the events described in this book is that while Davis's study does fit his modelling of the effects of diffuse capital, power and agency, the French army enjoyed a blunter and direct power in their first decades in Algeria. This cudgelling authority was evidently possessed of a far greater capacity to kill and to manage the social and economic space of Algeria in a fashion which induced demographic catastrophe on portions of the indigenous population. The biopower of the military state far exceeded the decentred poles of control of the more contested governance of the land from 1871 onwards.

What is more, the 'time of the army' was grounded in a coherent culture and ideology of violence which had been refined and reworked over a period of decades. This originated even before the arrival of French troops in 1830 with the construction of the idea of the Barbary Coast and ethnographic settling of this narrative with groups of innately violent Indigènes. Cruel violence of a kind that might be considered uncivilised in Europe was therefore established as being wholly natural and appropriate in this new theatre of war. In fact, violence was construed as a kind of gift and became connected to a set of musings in the European mind, for a causal logic was established whereby French savagery came to be rationalised as an understandable response to the rejection of a civilisational offer by the Indigènes. The self-serving circularity of such a form of argumentation became lost from the 1830s onwards as those French voices which had promoted legalism or other modes of more peaceful exchange with Algerians were either co-opted by advocates of violence or ignored. Indeed, the very fact that some tribes and regions were willing to pact with the French came to impose still greater pressure on recalcitrant groups of Indigènes in their encounters with an army for whom violence made sense of the world. Such groups, most especially, though not exclusively, in Kabylie, were structurally annihilated in a series of genocidal moments through the 1840s.

The difference and the specificity of the Algerian case would seem to offer two forms of conceptual understanding which may be of use elsewhere in histories of empire and genocide. The first is the notion

of mimetic, communicative, dialogic violence, which goes beyond Taussig's notion of European imperial atrocities constituting a new 'space of death'. While Taussig's account of terror certainly helps to explain European attitudes and behaviour in the very early days of the colony – where the lives of settlers seemed very similar to those of the besieged rubber barons of the Amazon – the armée d'Afrique moved on from that time to establish more forceful control grounded in a violence which was distinguished not by its being driven by terror but by its capacity to induce terror in its victims. In the evolving forms of the razzia, the French began to aspire to create forms of violence, most especially against civilian populations, which dazzled and inspired awe in the manner in which they communicated a capacity to degrade and destroy those who stood in the path of the empire. The crux of this system lay in its imaginative capacity, for while it purported to serve as a form of conversation between the French and the Indigène, it actually amounted to a dialogue within the mind of the European. While the bodies of Algerian victims were almost never discussed in French reports, the presumed thought processes of local survivors were always figured. The exact character of the 'moral effect' of French violence, and the salutary lessons it imposed, became known rather than presumed, and it was the circularity of this process in which the European thought as himself and his interlocutor which was one of the great sustaining forces of a genocidal continuum in Algeria.

Secondly, the specific forms of the lifeworld razzia, ecological genocide and environmental violence in the Algerian case offer much to the field, not least since Algeria became something of a testing ground for new forms of empire. It was the interlocking of massacres and attacks that had as their goal the capture of land and livestock which came to distinguish the razzia, for such assaults annihilated both in their present and in the future. The lifeworld razzia had at its core the aspiration to destroy the capacity of Indigènes to live outside of French dominion and, still more fundamentally, to eliminate the category of the independent human being in Algeria. It was the structured completist qualities of such an approach which generated a demographic catastrophe, for Algerians were assailed not just in their present but in their capacity to forge futures with any sense of autonomy. Such forms of temporal occupation and destruction were anticipated by Khodja, with his talk, as Abdelkader Djeghloul put it, of the French inaugurating a 'long, dark colonial night'. The conquest of Algeria was driven by completist urges to spatially and temporally settle and resolve France's new possession, which had

seemed so unstable and questionable through the 1830s. As Bugeaud mused, 'On n'a jamais dit, en Afrique, que tout était fini'.[74] It was, though, such desires and dreams of completion which led to the lives of so many Algerians being painted in sombre colours.

Notes

1 Introduction

1. Service Historique de la Défense (hereafter SHD) 1 H 83, ministerial report, 26 June 1842. I should like to thank the archivists and staff of the Service Historique de la Défense at Vincennes for their great help over my many visits to the archive in recent years. Additionally, I should like to express my gratitude to the Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer in Aix-en-Provence, the British Library, the Bibliothèque Nationale, Roehampton University, the Centre for Values, Ethics and Law in Medicine at the University of Sydney, Roger Cooter and the history of medicine seminar at UCL, Mark Jackson and the history of medicine seminar at Exeter, Dirk Moses, Martin Thomas, Colin Jones and, most of all, Ruth Hall.
2. Throughout this book I refer to the peoples of Algeria as 'Indigènes' because they were termed as such by the French in their colony. While the term has pejorative connotations today, it seems questionable to designate such people as being 'Algerians' because that monicker gathered together groups of people who had not necessarily seen themselves as having a common identity until it was assigned them later in the nineteenth century. While it is true that the term 'Algerian' was used by Ottomans and Europeans before 1830, it referred primarily to the peoples of the coastal Regency and not the Kabyles and other groups of the south who would eventually become incorporated into French Algeria.
3. Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie Contemporaine* (Paris: PUF, 1983), p.16.
4. SHD 1 H 121, Tellmann to Soult, 10 August 1847.
5. A. Dirk Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society in Australian History', in A. Dirk Moses (ed) *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and Stolen Indigenous Children in Australian History* (New York: Berghahn, 2004), 3–48, pp.6–7.
6. Martin Thomas, *The French Colonial Mind,* 2 vols (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011).
7. Given the scale of the documentary record left by the French in Algeria, it has been necessary to use sampling techniques with this great body of evidence, even within the records of the Service Historique de la Défense in Vincennes which provides the bulk of the primary source material used in this study. To take one example, the months of April and May 1842 produced 1638 pages of material (370 for the Province of Algiers, 301 for that of Constantine, and 967 for Oran) and overall the period under review generated more than 150,000 pages of records. Parts of this study (chiefly Chapters 4–7) therefore rely on detailed considerations of sample months in which every documented record has been consulted, while others

(especially Chapters 2 and 3) rely on Jean Nicot and Pascal Carrés catalogue of the 1 H sub-series, along with subsequent sampling and cross-checking. In most cases dates of correspondence are recorded, but in a small number of instances only the month of a document's composition can be provided. So as to reduce clutter in the text, in cases where a single document forms the basis of the subject matter of a paragraph, the document has tended to be cited just once at the start of that paragraph.

8. It seems telling that Soult is so little-mentioned in much of the secondary literature on colonial Algeria, not meriting, for instance an entry in key reference works such as: Jeannine Verdès-Leroux, *L'Algérie et la France* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2009) and Phillip Chiviges Naylor and Alf Andrew Heggoy, *Historical Dictionary of Algeria* (Metchen: Scarecrow Press, 1994).
9. Dawson Borrer, *Narrative of a Campaign against the Kabailes of Algeria, with the Mission of M. Suchet to the Emir Abd-el-Kader for an Exchange of Prisoners* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1848), pp. 132–33.
10. SHD 1 H 82, Brabatel on the interrogation of Mohammed ben Sabbaraouj, 12 April 1842.
11. Shula Marks, 'What is Colonial about Colonial Medicine? And What has Happened to Imperialism and Health?', *Social History of Medicine*, 10–2 (1997) 205–19, p. 215.
12. For example, see *Journal des Opérations de l'Artillerie pendant l'expédition de Constantine, octobre 1837* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1838).
13. Hester Burton, *Barbara Bodichon 1827–1891* (London: John Murray, 1949), p. 89.
14. Eugène Bodichon, *Considérations sur l'Algérie* (Paris: Schneider & Legrand, 1845), p. 13.
15. Jennifer E Sessions, *By Sword and Plow: France and the Conquest of Algeria* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), pp. 1–16.
16. Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, p. 164.
17. Benjamin Stora, 'The Algerian War in French memory: vengeful memory's violence', in Ussama Makdisi and Paul A. Silverstein (eds) *Memory and Violence in the Middle East and North Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), pp. 151–74, p. 158.
18. Abdelmajid Hannoum, *Violent Modernity: France in Algeria* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), p. 9.
19. Hannoum, *Violent Modernity*, p. 9.
20. Hannoum, *Violent Modernity*, pp. 7–8. On the knowledge and the project of making empire see also George R Trumbull IV, *An Empire of Facts: Colonial Power, Cultural Knowledge, and Islam in Algeria, 1870–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
21. Ann Thomson, *Barbary and Enlightenment: European Attitudes towards the Maghreb in the 18th Century* (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1987).
22. Benjamin Brower, *A Desert Named Peace: The Violence of France's Empire in the Algerian Sahara, 1844–1902* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), p. 5.
23. Annie Rey-Goldzeiguer, *Le Royaume arabe: la politique algérienne de Napoléon III, 1861–1870* (Algiers: SNED, 1977), p. 457; Charles-Robert Ageron, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, 8th edn (Paris: PUF, 1983), p. 89.
24. Brower, *A Desert Named Peace*, p. 5.

25. Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie: la guerre totale', in David El Kenz (ed), *Le massacre, objet d'histoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), pp. 253–74, p. 255.
26. Jacques Frémeaux, *La France et l'Algérie en guerre: 1830–1870, 1954–1962* (Paris: Economica, 2002).
27. James McDougall, 'Martyrdom and Destiny: The Inscription and Imagination of Algerian History', in Ussama Makdisi and Paul A. Silverstein (eds) *Memory and Violence in the Middle East and North Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), pp. 50–72.
28. Hannoum, *Violent Modernity*, p. 226.
29. Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society', p. 6.
30. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 260.
31. A good guide to criticisms of Le Cour Grandmaison's work can be found in Emmanuelle Saada 'Coloniser, exterminer: sur la guerre et l'État colonial', *Critique Internationale,* 3–32 (2006), pp. 211–16.
32. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 253.
33. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 254.
34. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 254.
35. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', pp. 255–56.
36. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 260.
37. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 262.
38. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 263.
39. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 264.
40. Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 262.
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43. Moses, 'Genocide and Settler Society', p. 36.
44. Mahfoud Bennoune, *The Making of Contemporary Algeria 1830–1987: Colonial Upheavals and Post-Independence Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 40.
45. Bennoune, *The Making of Contemporary Algeria*, p. 41.
46. SHD 1 H 82 1, Soult to Bugeaud, 2 April 1842.
47. Michael Taussig, 'Culture of Terror – Space of Death: Roger Casement's Putumayo Report and the Explanation of Torture', in Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois (eds), *Violence in War and Peace* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 39–53; Hal Langfur, *The Forbidden Lands: Colonial Identity, Frontier Violence and the Persistence of Brazil's Eastern Indians, 1750–1830* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).
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49. Taussig, 'Culture of Terror', p. 41.
50. Pierre Montagnon, *La Conquête de l'Algérie: Les Germes de la discorde, 1830–1871* (Paris: Pygmalion, 1986), p. 265.
51. Taussig, 'Culture of Terror', p. 49.
52. Taussig, 'Culture of Terror', p. 49.
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54. Jean-Claude Vatin, *L'Algérie: Politique, histoire et société* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation des Sciences Politiques, 1983), p. 112.

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4. Ann Thomson, *Barbary and Enlightenment: European Attitudes towards the Maghreb in the 18th Century* (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1987).
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14. Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600–1850* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2002), pp. 2–3.
15. See: Guy Attewell, *Refiguring Unani Tib: Plural Healing in Late Colonial India* (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2007) and David Arnold (ed), *Warm Climates and Western Medicine: The Emergence of Tropical Medicine 1500–1800* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996).
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17. Colley, *Captives*, p. 13.
18. Colley, *Captives*, p. 16.
19. Richard Veale, *Barbarian Cruelty; or a Narrative of the Sufferings of British Captives belonging to the Inspector Privateers during their slavery under Muley Abdallah, Emperor of Fez and Morocco, from January 1746 to their Deliverance in December 1750, with an Historical Account of the Country from the Earliest Periods, originally published by Thomas Troughton now republished by Timothy Le Beau, to which is subjoined A Relation of the Hardships endured by the crew of the Litchfield Man of War, shipwrecked on the Coast of Barbary in the year 1758* (Exeter, 1788).
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situation of the crew and the barbarity of the Moors to them. Also, the shipwreck of the Countess de Bourk on the Coast of Algiers (London: Thomas Tegg, 1761), p. 22.

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27. *Accurate Account*, p. 24.
28. *Accurate Account*, p. 25.
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31. Veale, *Barbarian Cruelty*, pp. 31–32.
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33. Veale, *Barbarian Cruelty*, p. 24.
34. Veale, *Barbarian Cruelty*, p. 9.
35. *Accurate Account*, p. 22.
36. *Accurate Account*, p. 21.
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60. SHD 1 H 75, 10 March 1841.
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68. SHD 1 H 66, 5, 8, 15, 17 December 1839.
69. SHD 1 H 67, 2 January 1840.
70. SHD 1 H 70, 28 July 1840.
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72. *Sur la Régence d'Alger au commencement de 1837* (Paris: E. Duverger, 1837), p. 7.
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80. Ducuing, *La Guerre de montagne*, p. 33.
81. Ducuing, *La Guerre de montagne*, p. 33.
82. Ducuing, *La Guerre de montagne*, p. 29.
83. Ducuing, *La Guerre de montagne*, p. 29.
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89. See William Gallois, *The Administration of Sickness: Medicine and Ethics in Nineteenth Century Algeria* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 93–134.
90. Bodichon, *Considérations sur l'Algérie*, p. 14; Le Cour Grandmaison, 'Conquête de l'Algérie', p. 266.
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92. Bodichon, *Considérations sur l'Algérie*, p. 15.
93. Bodichon, *Considérations sur l'Algérie*, pp. 14–15.
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101. Mansour Ahmed Abou-Khamseen, *The First French-Algerian War (1830–1848)*, PhD, University of California Berkeley, 1983.
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105. SHD 1 H 82, Bugeaud's 'Letter to the Army and the French in Algeria', 6 July 1842. See also: Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, pp. 154–73.
106. Hannoum, *Violent Modernity*, p. 138.
107. See Diana K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and the French Colonial Expansion in North Africa* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2007).
108. See also Brower, *A Desert Named Peace*.
109. SHD 1 H 49, Bugeaud, 2 July 1837.
110. SHD 1 H 48, Berlié, 23 May 1837.
111. SHD 1 H 51, 2 September 1837; SHD 1 H 53, 4 December 1837.
112. SHD 1 H 46, March 1837.
113. This book does not explore the gendered dimensions of the army's actions in Algeria, though it seems quite clear that such a project would be worth pursuing, given the distinct forms of masculinities and gendered validation which war in Africa provided.
114. SHD 1 H 94, Bugeaud, January 1844.
115. SHD 1 H 88, Bugeaud to Soult, 15 February 1843.
116. SHD 1 H 82, Négrier to Soult, 26 April 1842.
117. SHD 1 H 83, Bugeaud to Soult, 5 July 1842.
118. SHD 1 H 89, Soult to Bugeaud, 29 March 1843.
119. SHD 1 H 121, Bugeaud to Soult, July–August 1847.
120. SHD 1H 121, Tellmann to Soult, 13 July and 10 August 1847.
121. SHD 1 H 121, Tellmann to Soult, 13 July 1847.

3 L'armée d'Afrique

1. SHD 1 H 5, 25 November 1830.
2. SHD 1 H 20, 1 April 1833.
3. SHD 1 H 24, 10 January 1834.
4. SHD 1 H 27, 15 July, 29 August 1834.
5. SHD 1 H 39, 22 July 1836.
6. SHD 1 H 40, 16 August 1836.
7. SHD 1 H 41, 21 September 1836.
8. SHD 1 H 70, 27 July 1840.
9. SHD 1 H 77, 12, 21 August 1841.
10. Bouda Etemad, *Possessing the World: Taking the Measurements of Colonisation from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2007), p. 64.
11. SHD 1 H 8, 20 July 1842.
12. SHD 1 H 90, 2 May 1843.
13. SHD 1 H 82, Bugeaud to Soult, 15 April 1842.
14. SHD 1 H 82, Bugeaud to Soult, 15 April 1842.
15. SHD 1 H 82, Soult to Bugeaud, 30 April 1842.

16. Etemad, *Possessing the World*, pp. 62–63.
17. Etemad, *Possessing the World*, p. 63.
18. Frémeaux, *La France et l'Algérie*, p. 256.
19. Etemad, *Possessing the World*, pp. 64, 82.
20. Ducuing, *La Guerre de montagne*, p. 95; Frémeaux, *La France et l'Algérie*, p. 257.
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22. SHD 1 H 85, 8 August 1842.
23. Etemad, *Possessing the World*, p. 62; SHD 1 H 12, March–April 1832; 1 H 8, 19 July 1831; 1 H 13, 12–28 May 1832; 1 H 15, 12 July 1832; 1 H 17, 2 October 1832; 1 H 20, April–June 1833; 1 H 21, July–August 1833; 1 H 22, September–October 1833; 1 H 30, Rapatel, 11 January 1835; 1 H 33, 18 July 1835; 1 H 35, November–December 1835; 1 H 37, 4 March 1836; 1 H 37, 25 April 1836; 1 H 44, 10 January 1837; 1 H 64, 21 November 1839; 1 H 68, 14, 22, 25, 28 March, 2 April 1840; 1 H 69, 13, 27 May 1840; 1 H 70, 23 August 1840; 1 H 72, 1, 6, 13, 21 September, 12, 22, 31 October, 1840; 1 H 78, 11, 15 November 1841; 1 H 82, 15, 19 April 1842; 1 H 85, 8 August 1842; 1 H 86, 4 September 1842; 1 H 89, March–April 1843; 1 H 90, 17, 25 May 1843; 1 H 92, September–October 1843.
24. Etemad, *Possessing the World*, p. 63.
25. Etemad, *Possessing the World*, p. 63.
26. SHD, 1 H 15, 20 July 1832; 1 H 18, 3 November–27 December 1832; 1 H 19, 13–29 January 1833; 1 H 21, 1 July–24 August 1833; 1 H 38, 18, 19, 21 May 1836; 1 H 44, 30 January 1837; 1 H 52, 1–26 October 1837; 1 H 53, 4 December 1837; 1 H 54, 7 January 1838; 1 H 64, 8 November 1838; 1 H 86, 14, 15, 24 September. 4, 14 October 1842; 1 H 82, 15, 19 April 1842; 1 H 85, 8 August 1842.
27. SHD 1 H 9, September–October 1831.
28. SHD 1 H 38, 18, 19, 21 May 1836.
29. SHD 1 H 54, 7 January 1838.
30. SHD 1 H 8, June–July 1842.
31. SHD 1 H 83, June–July 1842.
32. SHD 1 H 64, 8 November 1839.
33. SHD 1 H 18, November–December 1832.
34. SHD 1 H 18, November–December 1832.
35. SHD 1 H 21, 1 July–24 August 1833.
36. SHD 1 H 27, July–August 1834.
37. SHD 1 H 44, 30 January 1837.
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54. SHD 1 H 33, 4, 15 (La Moricière) July 1835.
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58. SHD 1 H 46, Bugeaud to Soult, 16, 23 March 1837.
59. SHD 1 H 48, 1, 2 May 1837.
60. SHD 1 H 49, Bugeaud, 9, 24 July 1837.
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81. SHD 1 H 72, 18 September 1840.
82. SHD 1 H 73, 27 November 1840.
83. SHD 1 H 75, Bugeaud, 16 April 1841.
84. SHD 1 H 80, 19, 23 January 1842; 1 H 86, 28 July, 12, 14 September 1842.
85. SHD 1 H 32, May–June 1835.
86. SHD 1 H 26, May–June 1834.
87. SHD 1 H 49, 22 July 1837.
88. SHD 1 H 66, 5, 29 December 1839.
89. SHD 1 H 91, 1–18 July, 1–12 August 1843.
90. SHD 1 H 93, 30 November 1843.
91. SHD 1 H 11, 1, 15 January, 13–29 February 1832.
92. SHD 1 H 11, January–February 1832.

93. SHD 1 H 24, January–February 1834.
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95. SHD 1 H 67, 5, 8 January 1840.
96. SHD 1 H 80, 6, 8, 13 March 1842.
97. SHD 1 H 82, 2, 5 May 1842.
98. SHD 1 H 82, 2, 5 May 1842.
99. SHD 1 H 83, 9 June–14 July, 31 July 1842.
100. SHD 1 H 80, 6 February 1842.
101. SHD 1 H 70, 22 July 1840.
102. SHD 1 H 82, 16 May 1842.
103. SHD 1 H 91, 26 August 1843.
104. SHD 1 H 92, September–October 1843.
105. SHD 1 H 82, de Nion, May–June 1842.
106. SHD 1 H 92, 5, 13 September 1843; 1 H 93, 1–29 November, 16, 26 December 1843.
107. SHD 1 H 20, 22 June 1833.
108. SHD 1 H 30, 20 January, 1, 8 February 1835.
109. SHD 1 H 31, 3 (1835), 15 March 1835.
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111. SHD 1 H 88, 14 February 1843.
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114. SHD 1 H 86, 1, 2 October 1842.
115. SHD 1 H 83, Bugeaud to Soult, 4 July 1842.
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124. SHD 1 H 83,St Arnaud to Bugeaud, 11 July 1842.
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9. SHD 1 H 47, 10–11 April 1837; 1 H 80, 23 January 1842.
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23. SHD 1 H 26, d'Uzer, 1834; 1 H 36, 9 February 1834.
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42. SHD 1 H 24, 17 February 1834.
43. SHD 1 H 4, 27 July 1830.
44. SHD 1 H 7, Berthezène, 24, 26 May 1830.
45. SHD 1 H 20, May 1833.
46. SHD 1 H 34, 10 October 1835.
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61. SHD 1 H 74, 12 January 1841.
62. SHD 1 H 43, December 1836–July 1837.
63. SHD 1 H 42, 2 November 1836.
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65. SHD 1 H 76, 5–7 May 1841.
66. SHD 1 H 78, 26 October, 12 November 1841; 1 H 79, Soult to Négrier, 5, 24 December 1841.
67. SHD 1 H 83, 1, 6, 11 June 1842.
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16. SHD 1 H 83, 18 June 1842.
17. SHD 1 H 79, Soult, 24 December 1841.
18. SHD 1 H 80, 18, 20 February 1842.
19. SHD 1 H 83, Soult, 15 June, 6 July 1842.
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27. SHD 1 H 81, 29 March 1842.
28. SHD 1 H 81, 9 March 1842.
29. SHD 1 H 82, 6, 31 May 1842.
30. SHD 1 H 83, 21, 23, 28 September 1842.
31. SHD 1 H 86, 13 October 1843.
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33. SHD 1 H 91, July–August 1843.
34. SHD 1 H 92, 10–11 October 1843.
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6 A Future Painted in Sombre Colours

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7 An Algerian Genocide?

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